

# Industrial Worker

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1997

#1598, vol. 94 no. 1

\$1.00/50 p

EDUCATION

ORGANIZATION

EMANCIPATION

## IWW organizes Warehouse outlet

Workers at Warehouse Entertainment, one of the largest music and video retailers in the country (but located primarily throughout California), now have an IWW union drive happening in El Cerrito, Calif., with the San Francisco Bay Area GMB.

Workers filed for an NLRB election Dec. 16th with 75 percent of workers signing election cards. IWW organizers Jason Justice and Liam Flynn have signed up 15 out of 26 workers as dues-paying IWW members. Warehouse workers are paid \$4.75 per hour in an area where costs of living far exceeds the costs of most of the country. They are well aware that they cannot be paid legally lower wages in the United States and are ready to challenge the Warehouse. Workers are wearing their union buttons on their store aprons as they help customers buy CDs and rent movies.

The IWW majority in this Warehouse store almost guarantees an IWW victory in the very near future. General Distribution Workers IU 660 Warehouse workers of the IWW will soon be negotiating for higher pay, benefits and greater control over workplace decisions.

## Fizzle or Sizzle?

The IWW strike against Seattle's Lincoln Park Mini Mart is continuing strong, with daily picketing and strong support from the community. The boss is trying to tie workers up in the NLRB, where he's arguing that scabs should be allowed to vote the union out. The strikers responded Dec. 12 by filing for a directed bargaining order.

On Nov. 20, five days after the *West Seattle Herald* reported that the IWW organizing drive had "fizzled," Wobblies staged the second in a series of "gas-ins" where a group of strike supporters show up en masse and do everything short of breaking laws to shut the store down at the busiest time of day. This time they came in two shifts, the first stayed long enough to get the scabs to lock up the store and call the cops, but left before the police showed up and rallied for the second wave in a nearby park. No sooner had the scabs and Parko, the manager, opened the store back up than the second wave began trickling in, up to their usual antics.

One Wob (a former GST now residing in Olympia, Washington) put on a particu-

*continued on page 13*

## International dockers strike called

A worldwide storm is set to break over the Mersey Docks & Harbour Company with a 24-hour international shut-down of the docks industry planned for January 20. The action will be a coordinated show of solidarity with locked-out Liverpool dockers and their families, an attack on shipping lines that allow scabs to service their vessels or handle their containers, and a demonstration that dockers throughout the world are taking up the fight against casual labour and privatisation.

At least 15 different dockers' unions and the International Transport Workers' Federation have pledged support. The International Longshoremen and Warehouse-

men's Union on the U.S. West Coast has pledged a 24-hour blockade in all ILWU-organised ports. The new ITF position calls on "affiliated organisations to undertake all possible legal trade union strategies to put pressure on the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company and on shipping firms carrying cargoes that have been loaded by strike-breakers in Liverpool."

The international dockers strike is a dramatic example of growing workers' resistance. French truckers successfully struck to turn back attacks on their wages and working conditions. German workers forced employers to pull back from plans to slash their sick pay benefits. In Ontario, rolling

city-wide strikes are challenging government austerity plans. Workers are under attack everywhere, but are beginning to fight back.

A packed mass meeting of Liverpool dockers on 20 December voted overwhelmingly to reject Mersey Docks' "ultimate offer" and continue their fight for reinstatement. The rejected contract would have provided only 41 jobs, though 329 workers employed directly by MDHC would receive £25,000 severance pay. Some other workers would have received £2,500 severance pay. Torside dockers (fired for refusing to work overtime without getting overtime pay

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## National Protest Hits Borders Union-Busting

IWW members and supporters set up picket lines at some 30 Borders outlets across the country December 14th and 15th, in a national protest designed to increase the pressure on the book retailing giant to reinstate illegally fired IWW organizer Miriam Fried and abandon its campaign of harassment and intimidation of union supporters.

From Portland, Maine, to Tacoma, Washington, and Los Angeles, California, to Miami, Florida, Wobblies met holiday shoppers to let them know of the dispute and urge them to take their business elsewhere.

Borders is under increasing pressure. The Philadelphia City Council unanimously approved a resolution condemning Borders union-busting. United University Professions (AFT) – the U.S.'s largest union local representing higher education workers – has endorsed the boycott campaign, joining UFCW Local 1776, Pride At Work, chapters of the National Writers Union, etc. Articles about the dispute have appeared in *Publishers Weekly*, *Nation*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Ann Arbor News*, *Rock & Rap Confidential*, *Catholic Worker*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, etc. Two Borders stores have unionized since IWW picketing began. And the National Labor Relations Board investigation of Borders' union-busting is finally getting underway.

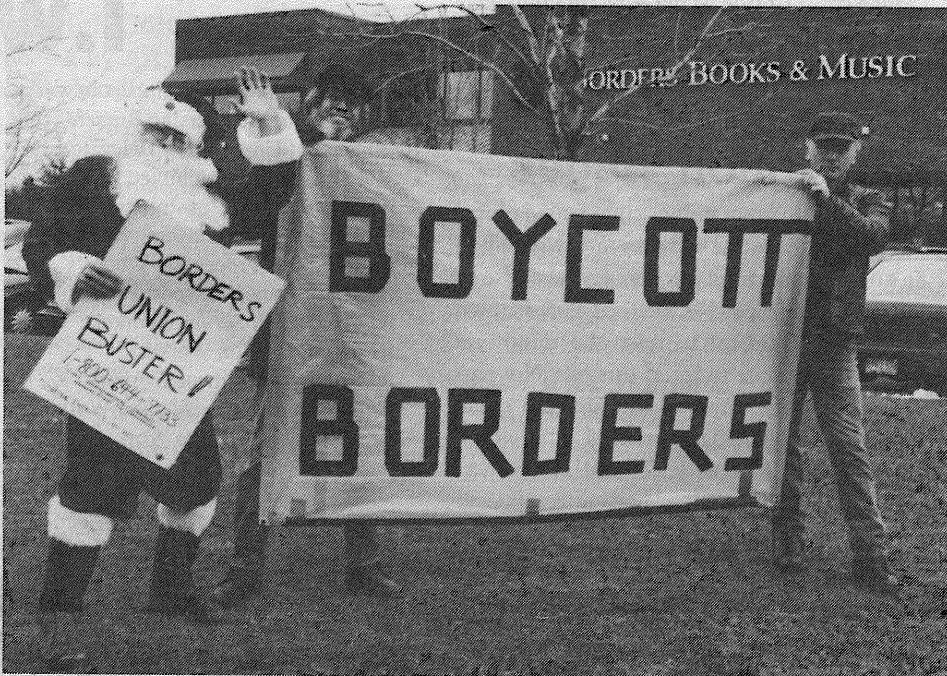
### Ann Arbor, Michigan

About 20 people showed up for a two hour picket and songfest at the Ann Arbor Borders on Saturday, Dec. 14. The event was hosted by the Southeast Michigan chapter of the National Writers Union. Participants included NWU members, Wobblies, Labor Party members, and members of several AFL-CIO unions. Over 1,000 leaflets were distributed. Xmas carols with alternate lyrics aimed at Borders were sung. A good number of customers were turned away. Borders management came out to argue with some of the picketers. A good time was had by all, except Borders management.

The next day activists were out for the second day in a row at Ann Arbor Borders on the six month anniversary of the firing of Miriam Fried at the Philly Borders store. Half of the pickets were Wobblies. The other half were fellow workers from various AFL-CIO unions whose picket lines the

### Numbering Corrected

Careful readers (and librarians) will note that we jumped a whole number from last issue. Last March we inadvertently repeated a number, now we're catching up.



*Capital District (New York) Wobs were joined by Syndicalist Santa Dec. 15th.*

*photo: Paul Poulos*

Wobblies have walked in the past few years. They included members of the National Writers Union, Teamsters, Graduate Employee Organization at the U of Michigan (AFT), Carpenters Union, Mason's Union, AFSCME, UAW, and Newspaper Guild – striking Detroit newspaper reporters.

Over a thousand leaflets were distributed, including 500 which contained Michael Moore's latest statement calling a Borders spokesman a liar. Wobbly singer Anne Feeney was among the picketers, stopping over to help out in Ann Arbor following a Saturday performance in Detroit to raise funds for the striking newspaper workers.

Following the picket the demonstrators retired to an inspiring benefit performance at the Common Language Bookstore where Anne Feeney, Chris Buhalis and Dylan Wilkerson held forth with Wobbly and other labor tunes. Proceeds were divided between the IWW to promote the Borders boycott, and the striking newspaper workers.

### Washington, D.C.

Three Wobs picketed the Washington, D.C. Borders for three hours Dec. 15, distributing approximately 450 fliers. Several

potential shoppers chose not to enter the store, but most took one from us as they hustled through the door, only reading it inside. So the best part was the 30 who came back out empty-handed with words of encouragement for us, words of outrage for Borders, promises to write or fax Ann Arbor, and declarations of their refusal to shop there until this thing is settled in Miriam's favor. The best were two women who exited noisily to tell us and anyone else within a block's radius that as a result of reading the flier, they had bought nothing, and instead just used the toilets – or as they put it triumphantly, "We peed on 'em!"

### San Francisco

On December 14th we picketed the San Francisco Borders in Union Square. We chose this one this because a coalition of organizations (including CISPES, AIWA, UNITE, and 50 Years is Enough) had declared Dec. 7 - 14 "Disney Week" to protest sweatshop labor conditions perpetuated by Disney in Burma, Haiti, the USA and elsewhere. There happens to be a Disney retail store right next to the Borders store. They

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## In This Issue...

**Fighting to Bring Back the 8-Hour Day**

**Education Workers News**

**Price Pfister Workers Battle Job Cuts**

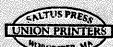
**Can We Afford Bosses?**

\$1.00, 50 pence UK



INDUSTRIAL WORKER  
103 West Michigan Avenue  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

ISSN 0019-8870



Periodicals Postage

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Ypsilanti, MI  
and additional  
mailing offices

**Address correction requested**



## Boycott Pepsi

Recently some publications have implied that the boycott against PepsiCo and its subsidiaries (Pepsi, Taco Bell, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Pizza Hut, Frito-Lay snacks) is over, which is not true. The basis of the boycott is PepsiCo's doing business in Burma/Myanmar, a country whose military government has been accused of summary executions, torture, forced labor (i.e. using people as human minesweepers), subverting democracy and rainforest destruction.

Due to severe pressure from boycotts, PepsiCo did sell off its interest in Pepsi-Myanmar, but continues to license PepsiCo products in Burma and so is contributing to the military dictatorship. Please continue to boycott all PepsiCo products and inform CEO Wayne Calloway of your decision (Somers NY 10589 or 800/433-COLA). For information of the PepsiCo boycott, contact the Burma Action Committee, c/o Matthew Donohue, 521 NW 8th Ave., Corvallis OR 97330. For information on boycotts in general a subscription to the *Boycott Quarterly* is highly recommended (\$20/year - PO Box 30727, Seattle WA 98103-0727).

Bob Krzewinski

## Starvation Wages

It is with great sadness that I must report that my home state of Missouri, which had a golden opportunity to benefit the cause of poor working people, instead voted down the people's effort to raise the minimum wage in our state to \$6.25 this past November. The only tiny ray of sunshine came from the fact that the city of St. Louis, which has the only Wobbly base in Missouri, was the only community in the entire state to stand up and support the people's effort. Unfortunately, we were no match against

# Readers' Soapbox

corporate wealth and power when it came to putting out their anti-worker propaganda. They spent millions telling Missourians why it's a good thing to keep working families in a forever state of poverty. And we bought it, like cows being led to slaughter.

Denis Cutter

## Uncritical Solidarity

In response to my claim that Zmagazine offers nothing on strategies to move labor out of the morgue, FW Jason Justice thinks, or seems to think, that complete solidarity with Z magazine is needed. His reasons for thinking so strike me as being acquiscent, and in one case factually erroneous.

JJ is wrong in his assumption that Z prints all the labor submissions it receives. He says in Nov. *IW*, "If Z doesn't print articles on the IWW it's because wobbles

don't send them in." No. I submitted an article, "Resurrect Labor Radicals," to Z on the necessity of radicalizing the AFL-CIO labor co. and building the IWW... Only a bottom-up worker uprising will break up the death waltz between capital and the AFL-CIO. Needless to say the article was never printed. M. Albert has told me that he thinks building the IWW "won't matter a whit." Strange things from a radical leftist, given that labor has never and will never budge without radicals.

JJ also points to the short article in Sept. Z on the IWW's national picketing of Borders for firing FW Miriam Fried. It's good that Z ran the article. But doesn't it strike JJ that given labor's paralysis there should be articles with a more intellectual metal and substance? Yes, I know Mike Albert runs alternative media projects, writes on work-

ers' plight, sysop's a top-notch bbs, and struggles to hold them all together. But does that justify the weak labor articles that appear in Zmag., the main vehicle of communication of all the Z projects? I'm personally fed up with watered-down, sugar-coated articles that take labor nowhere. Z being "the best there is" of left media means nothing to me as a worker as I'm seeing no labor movement taking shape, no left media inspiring one, barring *IW*, and no serious strategic ideas on which to build one. Support and unite with Z on its other left concerns, but let them know its labor articles aren't showing up for radical labor.

Matt Rozyczko, San Francisco.

*Editor's Note: I would hope that we can come up with more interesting topics for debate than the editorial policies of various alternative publications, few of which cover labor the way we think it ought to be covered. Unless someone has something substantially different to say on this topic, I am going to declare this discussion closed.*

# I.W.W. DIRECTORY

Job Branch= 5 or more members in workplace  
GMB=General Membership Branch  
IU=Industrial Union Del=Delegate  
GOC= Organizing Committee.

IU 330: Building Construction Workers  
IU 450: Print & Publishing House Workers  
IU 460: Food Processing Workers  
IU 510: Marine Transport Workers  
IU 610: Health Service Workers  
IU 620: Education Workers  
IU 630: Entertainment Workers  
IU 660: General Distribution Workers  
IU 670: Public Service Workers

## AUSTRALIA

### NEW SOUTH WALES

Sydney Regional IWW- PO Box 241, Surrey Hills 2010

## CANADA

### MANITOBA

Winnipeg GMB- B. Mackay, PO Box 3204, GNPO, R3C 4E7

### ONTARIO

Ottawa GMB- 388 1/2 Kent, K2P 2A9. 613/231-2922 <indwrk@web.apc.org>  
Toronto Group- Joe Chang, 137 Roncesvalles Suite 208, M6R 2L2 416/539-0780. Meets 1st Thurs 7 pm; phone for location.

## BRITISH ISLES

Regional Organising Committee- 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1 4WB, tel no 0116-266-1835. For contacts throughout the British Isles write or phone this office.

## ENGLAND

London Group and IU 530 Couriers Union- BM Box 4529, London WC1N 3XX, 0171-358-9124  
Oxford branch- c/o Oxford Claimants and Unemployed Workers Union, East Oxford Community Centre, Princes Street, Oxford  
Swindon Region GMB & Research Councils IU 620 group- del: Kevin Brandstatter, 9 Omdurman Street, Swindon SN2 1HA, 01793-610707  
General Distribution Workers IU660 and Bocomemouth IWW- Ray Carr, Flat 2, 35 Parkwood Rd., Boscombe, Dorset BH5 2BS

## SCOTLAND

Stevenson College IU 620 Branch- Rm 3.05 Bankhead Avenue, Sighthill, Edinburgh

## WALES

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## UNITED STATES

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IU630 Film Workers- Miguel Sanchez, 1748 Clinton St. Los Angeles 90026 213/368-4604 <fwo@machi1.directnet.com>  
Mendocino- Bill Meyers, del. 707/884-1818.  
San Diego Group- PO Box 907, 92112-0907. 619/284-WOBS  
Santa Cruz GMB- PO Box 534, 95061  
IU450 New Earth Press Job Shop- 1921 Ashby

Berkeley 94703 510/549-0176

UCB Recyclers/Compost IU620 Job Shop- 504 Eshleman Berkely 94720 510/642-4895. del.s: Cathy Brennan, Charles Long  
Integrated Switching & Networks TeleCommunications Collective, IU560 - 1442-A Walnut St. #344, Berkeley 94709 510/883-6960, gata@iww.org, del.s: Michelle Barnes, Deke Nihilson  
Communication Workers IU560- 2940 16th St. #216-2, SF94103, e-mail: iu560@iww.org Sec./Treas. Liam Flynn meets every Monday at 7 p.m.  
IU670 Berkeley Recycling Ctr. Job Shop- del: Jojo Mends, 1231 Second St., Berkeley 94710  
San Francisco Bay Area GMB- PO Box 40485, S.F. 94140. e-mail: sfgmb@iww.org Offices: Redstone Building, 2940 16th St. (at Capp), #216-2, San Francisco 94103 415/863-WOBS  
Long Haul Resource Center, 3124 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley 94705. 510/845-0540. GMB meets 3rd Saturdays at Long Haul, 1:30 p.m., Open delegates meeting 1st Saturdays at Long Haul, 1:30 p.m. General Organizing Committee meets 4th Saturdays at San Francisco office. GDC meets as needed contact: 510/549-0358.

## COLORADO

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Atlanta Group- George Nikas, 11 Clarendon Pl., Avondale Estates 30002. gnikas@unix.cc.emory.edu

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Honaunau Group- POB 868, Honaunau 96726.

## ILLINOIS

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## MARYLAND

Baltimore GMB- Del. Rafi Bey, PO Box 8882, 21224-0882. 410/367-3024

## MASSACHUSETTS

IU630 GOC- Jim Barclay, 75A Elm St. Worcester 01609  
Boston Area GMB & Education Workers IU 620- PO Box 391724, Cambridge 02139. del: Steve Kellerman 617/469-5162 Meets 2nd Sunday of each month at 2 p.m. Cambridge.  
Pioneer Valley Group- PO Box 154, Northampton 01061, e-mail: pviww@iww.org del: Mike D'Amore 413/549-1143

## MICHIGAN

SE Mich. GMB- 103 W. Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti 48197. 313/483-3548  
IU630 Workers Stories Workers Lives Job Shop- Albert Parsons 313/769-0695  
IU670 Ann Arbor Tenants Union Job Shop- 4001 Michigan Union, Ann Arbor 48109. 313/763-6876.

## MINNESOTA

Duluth GMB- 8 N. 2nd Ave E., #301, Duluth 55803 218/723-7887.  
Minneapolis-St. Paul- 7315 Dupont Ave. S., Richfield 55423-3025. 612/869-4139.

## MISSOURI

St. Louis GMB- c/o Bob Tibbs, Jr., 10072 Hedge Dr., St. Louis 63137. 314/868-1472

## MONTANA

Butte- Mark Ross, PO Box 233, 59703. 406/782-4465

## NEW JERSEY

Cape May County GMB & Building Construction Workers IU 330- c/o Richard Neill, POB 261, Cape May Court House 08210.

## NEW YORK

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Capital District Group- POB 74, Altamont 12009. 518/861-5627.  
Rochester- Del: Ric Garren, 716/232-4005.  
NYC GMB- Del: Wade Rawluk, 5610 Netherland Ave #4D, Bronx 10471. 718/796-3671.  
Rochelle Semel, RD 1 Box 158-B, Hartwick 13348. 607/293-6489.

## NORTH CAROLINA

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Portland Group- POB 15005, 97293-5005. email: mmiller@ori2ednet.org 503/650-7187

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Philadelphia GMB- 4722 Baltimore Ave. 19143. phillyiww@iww.org  
IU660 Wooden Shoe Books Records Job Shop- 112 S. 20th St. Philadelphia 19103. 215/569-2477.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

IU450 Harbinger Publications Job Shop- Merll Truesdale, del., 18 Bluff Rd. Columbia 29201. 803/254-9398

## TENNESSEE

Memphis- c/o Dennis Henke, 3461 Douglass, Memphis 38111 901/458-9907.

## TEXAS

Austin Group- c/o Joshua Freeze, 1406 W 9th, 78703. 512/482-9402.  
Houston Group- PO Box 981101, 77098.  
Rio Grande- Del.: Erik Carlos Toren, 1018 S 12th Ave., Edinburgh 78539-5606 210/381-6786

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## VERMONT

Burlington Branch- c/o Thomas Jordan or Deborah Ormsbee, POB 1004, Williston 05495. 802/482-4601 or 863-0571 nfnena@igc.apc.org

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IU460 Fairhaven Co-op Flour Mill Job Shop- 1115 Railroad Ave. Bellingham 98225.  
Industrial Transportation Project- Arthur Miller, POB 5464, Tacoma 98415-0464  
Puget Sound GMB- P.O. Box 4814 Seattle 98104-0814 206/935-9012

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IU450 Lakeside Press Job Shop- 1334 Williamson, Madison 53703 608/255-1800.  
Madison GMB- c/o Lakeside. Del: Jerry Chernow

## WYOMING

Jackson- Teton Jack Langan, del., POB 4056, 89001. 307/733-4553

## Industrial Worker

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Printed by Teamsters union labor  
Online Edition: <http://iww.org/~iw/>

ISSN 0019-8870 Official monthly  
publication of the Industrial  
Workers of the World. Periodicals  
Postage Paid Ypsilanti MI & other  
mailing offices.

**Postmaster:** send address  
changes to: Industrial Worker, 103  
West Michigan, Ypsilanti MI 48197.

**Individual Subscriptions \$15**  
**Library Subs \$20/year**  
(Member sub included in dues)

Articles not so designated do not  
represent the official position of the  
IWW. Donations welcome.

Press Date: December 23, 1996



## Northwest Regional IWW Conference March 7th & 8th

The Portland IWW will host a Northwest Regional Confab on the weekend of March 7th and 8th, 1997. We haven't decided on a hall yet, but there are several to choose from. All Wobblies in the region or not, are invited to participate.

We expect to provide sleeping spaces and food. Local musician Wob will almost certainly be playing in a nearby pub at least one of those nights. At some point we'll need an idea of how many people to plan for, but wait till we free up some fingers to count on.

We have in mind developing a loose agenda, probably along the lines of how we can help each other's work in the region, and what we might be able to accomplish together that we wouldn't consider by ourselves. Please help us with that.

We welcome offers of workshops, entertainment, and other presentations. Personally I'd like to see more northwest IWW history and some practical lessons on organizing and running a meeting.

We'll get further information out as soon as we make it up. Meanwhile, we can be contacted at: Portland IWW, PO Box 15005, Portland OR 97293-5005 (503) 650-7187 (ms) or mmiller@orednet

— Gwion

### D.C. Borders picket

Washington, D.C. Borders (L and 18th) was rewarded with its first IWW picket November 9th. Two Wobs and two supporters spent three sunny but progressively colder hours outside the store, during which time 600 copies of a fine leaflet by FW Menzer (ex-Philly Borders) were distributed, about 20 potential customers decided to shop elsewhere, and some good conversations took place with passers-by about unions in general and the Wobblies in particular.

Pickers were large sandwich-boards emblazoned with eye-catching black cats on a yellow background, plus such slogans as 'IWW supports Borders workers,' 'Union-Busting Borders,' 'Reinstate Miriam Fried,' and 'Union organizing is a right!'

Three or four workers came out to chat at different times. They said they were pleased to see us, and that our flier had been posted in the break-room inside and well studied, but that the atmosphere and conditions at this particular store were not too bad, and not nearly as bad as at Barnes and Noble. A cunning management ploy to divert our energies against a major competitor, I wondered? Then again, one of them, a temp, said that despite all that, he thought

## Around Our Union

they still did need a union. The weather notwithstanding, relatively good fun was had by all, and our two supporters took out red cards after the picket was over.

— Mike Long, O'ahu GMB (on leave)

### Free Speech at Borders?

Capital District IWW, with help from Central New York Wobblies and other activists, picketed the Albany Borders Oct. 5th to protest efforts to celebrate "banned books week" in conjunction with the local ACLU chapter. Hundreds of *Industrial Workers*, Boycott Borders fliers and other materials related to FW Miriam Fried's firing were distributed and plenty of educational work was done on the sidewalk.

The Albany-area Borders clientele seemed less sympathetic to labor and our boycott than a recent picket in Brooklyn Heights, NY, according to GEB Chair Rochelle Semel. "We turned away nearly 80 percent of the people who approached us," she said of the action the month before. In Albany some customers decided not to enter the store, a few proudly declaring their union membership. Many others entered the store, but soon exited empty-handed.

"I think we really had an effect," IWW Delegate Greg Giorgio explained. "We spent a lot of time in one-on-one conversations with people talking about Miriam, pointing out the 'free speech' hypocrisy of Borders and the ACLU working together..."

Borders management apparently didn't want to call attention to the dispute, and allowed picketers to remain on the sidewalk in front of the main entrance, greeting each potential customer as they approached the store. But when picketers returned Nov. 30th, Borders managers forced them to a catwalk strip inches from the congested roadway. Wobbly ingenuity took over, with picketers standing at the edge of the driveway speaking to incoming drivers and encouraging them to stay away. A highly visible Boycott Borders banner has helped attract motorists' attention, and many drivers are expressing their solidarity.

## PREAMBLE TO THE IWW CONSTITUTION

**The working class and the employing class have nothing in common.** There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of the working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life. **Between these two classes** a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the Earth.

**We find** that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

**These conditions can be changed** and the interests of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

**Instead of the conservative motto**, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system." **It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism.** The army of production must be organized, not only for everyday struggle with the capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.



San Francisco Wobblies marching in solidarity with Lafayette Park Hotel workers. Behind them are graduate student employees from the University of California, who are in the midst of a series of strikes to pressure the administration to open negotiations.

photo: Mike Ballard

## Anniversary of Centralia Tragedy Marked

Acknowledged by many North Americans as Veteran's Day, November 11th also marked the 77th anniversary of the Centralia Tragedy and its judicial carnival. On what was then called Armistice Day in 1919, tension between union workers and anti-union thugs came to a head with the local chapter of the American Legion diverting their parade route to march in front of the local IWW hall. Once in front of the union hall, the Legionnaires charged and attacked with rifle fire.

Expecting the attack, most of the Wobblies had fled; others attempted to flee when their efforts to defend the hall were overwhelmed. But fellow worker Wesley Everest returned fire with his revolver, killing four and wounding several others until he was caught by the mob, beaten and dragged to jail. Later that night the mob returned, unhindered if not welcomed by the authorities pulled Wesley Everest from jail, beat him again, made several attempts to hand him, riddled his body with bullets and dumped his body into a river.

His body was recovered the following day and dumped in the jail cell beside his imprisoned fellow workers. His body remained there for two days before being hosed off and boxed off. Ironically, Wesley Everest was himself both a Wobbly and a veteran of World War I.

This year I joined the crowd of Wobblies and friends for the annual pilgrimage to Centralia, Washington, to visit the monument of those "poor vets" who were gathered "peacefully" and were murdered "while wearing the uniform of their country"; gaze at the sterile plaque for those who died for the cause of labor; and flier at the same American Legion Hall that carried out the murderous will of the capitalist lumber and mining interests under the mask of patriotism and nationalism.

At first I was somewhat apprehensive about confrontation with a bunch of 80-year-old codgers whose beliefs and perspectives have been cemented in place for 50 years before my screaming yap ever graced this planet. Being a veteran of Operation Desert Slaughter, I have what some people say is an unhealthy aversion to the military. I like to say its a blinding, soul-encompassing hatred. Nevertheless, I accompanied my fellow workers and friends up the stairs where the Legionnaires were having their Veteran's Day brunch.

Much to my surprise we were greeted, if not positively than somewhat in a confused oblivion. There was, of course, the jackass that wadded up the leaflet and threw it in the face of our friend's 3-year-old and told us

continued on page 13

### Combined Issue

As part of efforts to contain costs, the General Executive Board has directed that publication be cut back to 10 issues per year until union finances permit restoration of monthly publication. This is the first combined issue under this policy.

As subscriptions run by whole number, subscribers will not be affected by this change. Members are encouraged to share their views on this experiment.

### Advertising

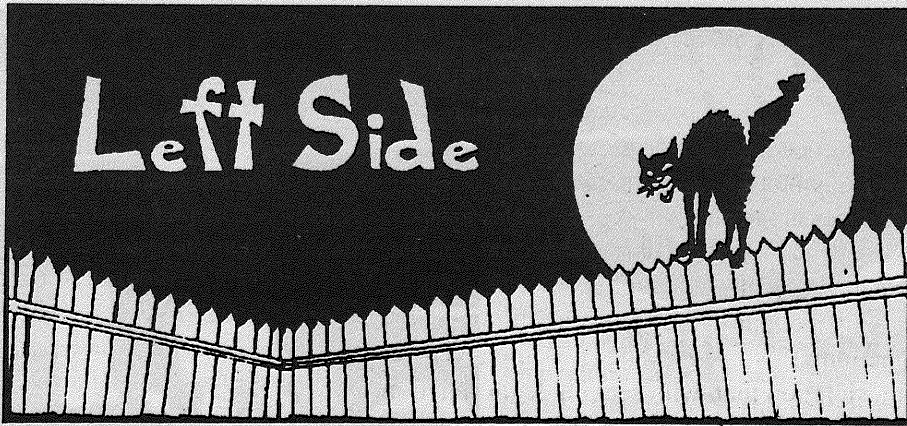
The membership has voted to allow a limited amount of advertising in the newspaper to IWW job shops and branches or for labor-related items. Rates and policies are in the process of development. Inquiries should be directed to the editor.

### IWW Election

IWW members have voted to raise IWW regular and maximum dues to \$10 and \$15 per month, respectively, to allow advertising in the *Industrial Worker*, to hold the 1997 General Assembly in St. Louis, Missouri, and to ease the rules governing the establishment of regional organizing committees outside North America.

General Secretary-Treasurer Fred Chase and *Industrial Worker* editor Jon Bekken were re-elected. The 1997 General Executive Board will be comprised of: Liam Flynn, Berkeley, CA; Bob Tibbs Jr., St. Louis, MO; Monica Berini, Berkeley, CA; Penny Pixler, Chicago, IL; Kevin Brandstatter, Swindon, U.K.; Mike D'Amore, Northampton, MA; Michael Reinsborough, Los Angeles, CA. Robert Rush, Berkeley, CA, will be First Alternate.





In one of Chicago's local freebies, the guide to places of historical interest had this revealing little item: "The House Beautiful: One Family's Search for the Arts and Crafts Ideal," a paean to John and Frances Glessner's quest to create a haven for their family, a space where objects of beauty and usefulness would uplift the spirit, and a fortress sufficient to ward off the industrialist's less-uplifted employees....

"They have taken untold millions that they never toiled to earn."

Occasionally watching the boob tube can have its bit of perverse entertainment. A Sunday night feature is *Sixty Minutes*, which dealt with three subjects: cigarettes, "Afrocentric" teaching, and the proliferation of white-tailed deer encroaching on many urban areas of Freedomland.

Some years back all cigarette and tobacco advertising was banned from the airwaves. But now the complaint is that Hollywood in many of its movies shows its leading actors puffing on the evil weed. Supposedly said leading actors are role models for the youth of Freedomland, who thusly become addicted to Lady Nicotine. The anchors of this program waxed most indignantly over the seduction of innocent youth to vile habits and an untimely succumbing to lung cancer.

Copious tears of indignation are being shed by our media moguls, but your cantankerous scribe detects a rather reptilian bouquet to those tears. The movies' darlings have been puffing away as well as swilling tumblers of scotch on the silver screen as long as your scribe can remember, and that is quite a long stretch. The tobacco companies are among some of the biggest industries here in Freedomland, and as long as workers don't have any control over their workplaces you know the big money men will continue to call the shots, and you can stow all the talk about the mandate of the electorate along with Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny and the immaculate conception.

In reality, the danger of lung cancer could be dramatically reduced if pure unadulterated tobacco were used. Because it would be straight tobacco, it would of course be stronger than any of the popular brands that have been made artificially mild so that non-smokers will be able to make their purchases. Nothing is said about the additives that are added to cigarette tobacco that encourage addiction to a particular brand. There would be fewer smokers and they would not be chain-smokers.

The indigenous peoples of this Hemisphere have been smoking for thousands of years, and I have never heard any accounts of cancer wards. Western archaeologists have been robbing Indian graves for hundreds of years, and if any evidence of lung cancer were found among these cadavers or skeletons they would have been quite vociferous about it.

According to the anchormen on *Sixty Minutes* there are now more white tail deer encroaching upon urban areas than there were at the time the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. (Did the Indians conduct a deer census that year?) They are looked upon as a menace to automotive traffic and are destructive to suburban garden plots, not to mention that they are disease carriers. I wonder if they have as many diseases as we two-leggeds have. Those who wish to eliminate them are being frustrated by animals rights activists, creating a bone of contention among the good suburbanites.

Your scribe has always enjoyed the sight of a deer or a group of deer gamboling across the landscape, and even if some of the rascals would make some incursions upon his cornfield or cabbage patch, it was not anywhere near as disastrous as the surplus value from his wages that he never got to see. However, as a concession to those who would like to keep the deer population under control, I would remind them of countries like Germany where venison is available at any small city restaurant at reasonable prices. Here in Freedomland venison is a fancy-pants dish at fancy-pants prices.

The most interesting part of this program was the bit on Afro-centric teaching in certain schools. Quite justifiably, some blacks who live in Freedomland feel that only caucasians are given any notice in the history books and school curricula. Much is said about the contributions of classic Greece and Rome, but not that these areas were influenced by a much older civilization, ancient Egypt. Afrocentrists maintain Egypt was a black culture.

The portrait sculpture that comes down through the ages, along with the tomb paintings, testifies that the ancient Egyptians were indeed a dark-skinned people who had pronounced negroid characteristics and obviously were a racial mixture with the black races of the lower part of Africa. The fact is that the earlier civilizations had their geneses in areas of the Earth where the vegetation season was long and the Sun made people of a darker complexion, whether these early cultures were of caucasoid, negroid, mongoloid or Amerind stock.

What was most amusing was the reaction of the anchor people toward these ideas. Their reactions bordered on pure, naked paranoia. The very foundations of their long-held beliefs were being attacked and it was amusing to see erstwhile cool and collected anchormen who could remain cool and collected while recounting the plethora of massacres, conflagrations and other human disasters suddenly reacting like cornered rabbits.

Incidentally, your scribe wishes to inform the gentle reader that color discrimination, while too often looked upon as a social factor, is in reality an economic factor. Even in darker-skinned societies, those who happened to be of a lighter complexion considered themselves as better stock. Naturally those who were working out in the fields were exposed to far more ultra violet rays than their overlords who remained in the shade being fanned by servants.

Likewise, those who build the pyramids, acropoli, Roman forums, great walls and what have you got their skins well barbecued. Their aristocrats kept themselves well in the shade. Would these parasites admit to the proles that the reason that they were dark was that they did the actual work that enabled their culture to become an advanced civilization? Hell no; the proles were told that they were dark because they were of inferior stock and not as good as those whose skins were fair. They were told that a fair skin was proof of better blood, and over the ages succeeded in laying upon a complex upon the swarthy working stiffs.

Too damn bad the Mayflower didn't sink!

— C.C. Redcloud

## Feel that Prosperity

The well-paid economists are stepping up their campaign to redefine our way into prosperity by slashing the inflation rate. Not slashing inflation, mind you. Prices are rising just as fast as ever. What the economists and politicians are up to is much easier — they're planning to redefine the way the inflation rate is calculated in order to cut inflation-pegged hikes in social security, retirement and pay checks.

It seems the current inflation rate doesn't pay enough attention to the cost of caviar and luxury yachts, or to the effects of growing immiseration. The way these economists figure it, when workers start eating tofu because meat's gotten so expensive they can't afford it any more, the cost of living has fallen. Similarly, when unemployed workers are evicted from their homes and relocate to the streets, current inflation statistics don't capture the savings. (They call this a "substitution" saving.)

By slashing the inflation rate, these buccaneers plan to save \$200 billion dollars over the next 11 years by changing the way the price index is calculated. If I could just get them to work on my landlord...

## Gingrich: Friend of Labor

The AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Department's *maritime newsletter* (October 1996) reports the surprising news that (to quote the headline) "Workers Came Out Ahead in the 104th Congress." The article explains, "Most worker-related programs were left untouched. Indeed, there was real progress in some areas." It's been a long time since workers could claim to have come out ahead in Congress, so AFL members may be wondering why their officials felt it necessary to spend nearly \$100 million of their dues trying to oust the Republicans who provided this bounty.

Of course, most workers who saw this item probably had a more urgent question — if workers are gaining all this ground, how come we're so hard pressed to get by?

Workers didn't really come out ahead in that chamber of capitalist hirelings last year, it's just that the AFL has been groveling so long at the feet of the rich and powerful that when they receive a really firm kick (instead of just being ignored) it feels like a pat on the head to them. If you've grown tired of being bashed in the head, perhaps its time to build One Big Union, capable of standing on its own two feet and determined to do so.

## Shilling for the Moonies

Former U.S. President George Bush recently travelled to Buenos Aires to help inaugurate a new Spanish-language newspaper, *Times of the World*, being established to promote the Moonies' views throughout Latin America. Bush and Moon were the main speakers at the launch.

## Once a Scab...

In 1987 James Dick crossed the NFL players' union picket line to play football for the Minnesota Vikings. A few weeks ago he was arrested for hiring a shoplifter to nab Armani suits and other luxury goods from department stores. At least he's picking his victims better now...

## One Billion Unemployed

The International Labor Organization reports that one billion adults (nearly a third of the world's labor force) are either unemployed or underemployed, the highest level seen since the Great Depression. Meanwhile, working hours (for those working) are rising in most industrialized countries, and Britain is in a row with the European Economic Community over its refusal to accept a maximum 48-hour workweek. British Prime Minister John Major says a longer work week is necessary in order to prevent

unemployment. Ain't capitalism wonderful?

## Rent A Slave

The Dec. 8 *New York Times* reports that growing numbers of companies are laying off workers, and bringing them back as temporary or contract workers at a fraction of their former pay. Some 15 percent of "contingent workers" previously worked for their employer as full-time workers. One temp agency reports that former employees make up 80 percent of the 1,000 workers it supplies to Pacific Bell each day. They call this "labor market flexibility"...

## Murder, Inc.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 6,210 U.S. workers were killed on the job in 1995. Another 3.6 million suffered disabling work injuries.

This rotten capitalist system cripples and maims us on the job, throws us on the streets to save a buck, and then has the nerve to crow about "competitiveness" and soaring stock prices. If you can't afford the boss class any more, how about joining with us to build One Big Union capable of dumping the bosses off our backs?

The circulation of this newspaper has been gradually increasing over recent months, but there are still thousands of workers out there who'd be glad to read the *Worker* if we could get it into their hands. Have you checked with the local bookstore to see if they might take a few copies on consignment? Have you considered taking a small bundle to share with your fellow workers? Does your branch have someone in charge of getting the paper out? (or, for that matter, of getting local labor news to the paper?) If this paper is to reach your fellow workers, it's up to you to get it to them...

— Jon Bekken

## Rubber Stampede Strike

In an unusual labor action, about 140 factory workers spontaneously walked off their jobs November 13, without warning and without union representation or contract protection.

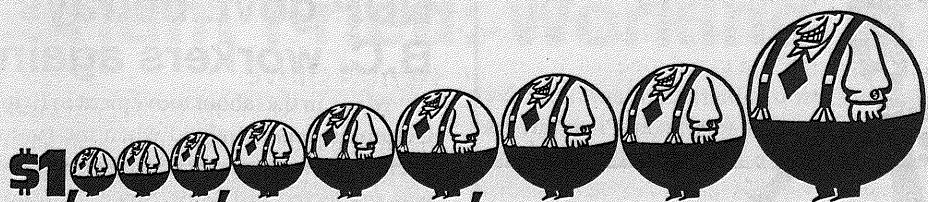
Employees at Rubber Stampede, an Emeryville-Oakland company that makes ornamental rubber stamps sold in stores around the world, are fighting for their lives against a union-busting employer.

Mostly Latinas, the workers saw their hopes of unionization dashed last April, when Warehouse Union Local 6, ILWU, lost a NLRB representation election after the company hired about 15 new management employees and threatened and harassed many workers into not voting. The union election was lost by 13 votes.

After an investigation, the NLRB issued a complaint against the company for coercing workers during the organizing drive prior to the election. A hearing is scheduled before an administrative law judge on January 27. Workers were already outraged that their bosses were stalling on settling the unfair labor practice charges. But when Rubber Stampede recently retaliated against workers by cutting back their wages from an hourly rate to piecework — the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back — the workers walked out... and then contacted the Union for support.

Since the strike began, pickets have complained of threats (including one death threat) and verbal harassment from management officials outside the plant. Some women strikers have received obscene phone calls from management personnel during the wee hours of the morning. And windows of four strikers' cars were smashed during a single night recently, near their homes in the East Bay.





**IT TOOK FROM 1776 UNTIL 1986 FOR 26 BILLION-DOLLAR FORTUNES TO BE GATHERED. ONLY 10 YRS. LATER, THERE ARE 109 NEW BILLIONAIRES IN THE U.S.A.**

## Readers' Soapbox...

### Economic Power's the Thing

Economic power is political power. However, politicians and parties, left and right, aligned with high-paid and heavy-fisted porkchoppers (who control their unions from the top down), have historically served to prevent, diffuse or coopt every healthy form of active worker expression which might have significantly altered the balance of economic power in favor of the wage-slaves in this country, and others as well.

Just several days ago, it was not a "Socialist Party" in France that essentially brought a hostile government to its knees in 12 days, sent devastating economic shockwaves throughout the European community, galvanized the country's workers in solidarity, but rather, French *truckers*, who, with the full support of their labor organization (fortunately), virtually shut down France's economy and reportedly won 90 percent of their just demands. Justice in this case was achieved by workers who had taken to the streets by the thousands.

Similarly, workers in Toronto have stood their provincial government at attention. So successful was the Toronto Days of Action campaign, that the organizers are now in the process of forming a committee for a general strike. They appear to have discovered the obvious, i.e., the magnificent political power attached to the quiet and peaceful economic shutdown of a city by its workers. It is a power like none that could ever be achieved at the ballot box or by workers diddling away energy, time, and resources with political parties and their psuedo intellectual vanguard leaders who promise the world but deliver jellybeans. Rather, workers gain a quiet sense of strength, pride, and self-respect, knowing that they can gain control of their economic lives, the environment and social justice — by simply folding their arms and withdrawing their labor in concert. This, then, is political power where it belongs — in the hands of working people not with political party and union hacks.

There is cause for working people to celebrate these and other recent massive economic actions occurring around the globe (Denmark, Mexico, UK (Merseyside Dockers), Italy, Germany); because they give hope to the grand and noble purpose of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) — that is, one day all workers will elect to join hands together as members of "One Big Union." And from within its industrial self-governing and democratic framework shape a new society.

Direct "Economic" Action gets the goods...

Paul Poulos

### Three Strikes

"Three strikes and you're out" is the theme expressed repeatedly by politicians of all parties during these past many months. It is offered as the magic solution to all crime.

In connection with the criminal deceit, denial and obfuscation by the Pentagon in these three cases listed, we suggest our lawmakers apply the same solution to those responsible in the Military, the CIA and the Energy Department:

1. The over-40 year denial of radiation

exposure to veterans of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and subsequent nuclear testing.

2. The 10- to 15-year denial to Viet Nam veterans over their exposure to Agent Orange.

3. The most recent 3-year denial of exposure to chemical weapons and depleted uranium ammunition in the Gulf War.

When a country deliberately lies to its veterans, their widows and genetically damaged children, is it any wonder that so many citizens have lost confidence in those we employ to manage our government?

Three strikes and out should apply to all these rascals, as their crimes are far more serious than many of the thousands now in our packed jails all over the country.

Only the truth will make us free.

Walter G. Hooke  
Vet. of USMC Occupation of  
Nagasaki, 1945-1946

### Holiday Greetings

The Cape May County Building Construction Workers Industrial Union #330, IWW, extends holiday greetings to you and yours.

When the new year of 1997 rings in, we will have been a branch for five months. We look forward to the new year with enthusiasm. Our program, establish a "*Co-operative Society of Working Men/Women*."

We hope to be productive in this endeavor. We wish the same to Wobblies the world over in the struggle to better the lives of their fellow workers.

Richard D. Neill, X332713

### International Day of Solidarity with Leonard Peltier

February 6 will be the Second International Day of Solidarity with Leonard Peltier, focussing on efforts to gain executive clemency and congressional hearings into the U.S. government's activities and cover-up in the "incident at Oglala" on the Pine Ridge Lakota Reservation.

The government claims to believe in equal justice for all, but its actions prove otherwise. Congress investigates the abuse of power at Ruby Ridge and in the case of white supremacists, but turn their backs when it comes to people of color.

Leonard Peltier is a Chippewa/Lakota American Indian Movement activist who was framed on a charge of killing two FBI agents who were attacking an encampment at the Pine Ridge reservation. Peltier was extradited from Canada on admittedly false affidavits. His attorneys were barred from presenting evidence that had won acquittal to two other AIM activists tried earlier. Evidence was fabricated, witnesses were intimidated, and the government did everything in its power to ensure that Peltier would not receive a fair trial.

Please send letters requesting clemency and the release of 6,000 pages of secret FBI documents on Peltier's case to President Bill Clinton, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington DC 20500. Ask Senator Arlen Specter (U.S. Senate, SH-530, Washington 20510) to call Congressional hearings.

Contact the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee (POB 583, Lawrence KS 66044) or the Northwest Leonard Peltier Support Network (PO Box 5464, Tacoma WA 98415-

1997 is off to a promising start for the One still far from Big but getting bigger. Union membership continues to rise, 79 percent in the last two years. Revenue is up as the membership starts coming to grips with our financial problems.

Organizing is up. It's showing in the increase number individual members, increases in the number and size of branches, and increase in the number of shops where organizing is underway. The Fellow Workers in San Francisco have brought a majority of the workers at a Wherehouse Records shop into the IWW before seeking recognition. Legal recognition is a formality when the workers are already functioning as a union. The IWW has always been more concerned with the reality of a situation than with seeking legal sanction.

In Seattle the mini-mart workers remain strong in their fight for recognition, again with a majority organized into the union before legal recognition was sought.

### from the desk of...

Reports are still coming in on the actions taken by Wobblies and other Fellow Workers against Borders Inc. in solidarity with Miriam Fried on the 6-month anniversary of her firing on a pretext, quite obviously for her organizing efforts at the Philly Borders. We're hearing of leafletting, picketing, potential customers turned away in locations where we don't even have any current members. Professors at prestigious universities are sending copies of messages they've sent to Borders informing the company that they will not be shopping there nor sending any students there for books and are encouraging their colleagues to take the same stand. Few days pass without a message from another author who is endorsing the boycott.

The media seems to be finding the struggle of interest. Articles about the boycott are popping up all over the place. Every article makes more sympathetic workers aware of the struggle and decreases Borders' profits. The controversy between Michael Moore ("Roger and Me", "TV Nation", "Downsize This!") and Borders continues to give Miriam's firing publicity. Following his article in *The Nation* exposing Borders' attempt to silence him when he expressed support for organizing at the book chain, a Borders representative issued a statement containing numerous distortions about their attempts to silence Moore. Moore has responded with a statement saying he can prove they are lying because he has several of the events on tape.

We're receiving numerous expressions and actions of solidarity from rank-and-file members of AFL-CIO unions in the Borders struggle. In Ann Arbor where we were on the line at Borders for two days at the anniversary of the firing, we were joined by members of the Teamsters, Masons, Carpenters, Newspaper Guild, UAW, AFSCME, U. of Michigan Graduate Employees (AFT), National Writers Union and Musicians Union, most of them paying back acts of solidarity Wobblies have and are demonstrating for strikes in which they were and are involved. There's something in the air. It smells like solidarity; and it doesn't bode well for the bosses. It's the lifeblood of the labor movement, highly toxic for the employing class.

It's clear that this could be a long struggle. Borders could have resolved it long ago by admitting their mistake and rehiring Miriam. Not doing so has cost them at least tens if not hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost sales. No doubt at first they figured we would get tired and fade away. With the events surrounding the December 15th anniversary and growing support for the boycott it should be clear to them that we mean it when we say "We Never Forget!" The only thing which makes sense in regard to their ongoing refusal to resolve this conflict is that they are thinking that a settlement would make them more vulnerable to unionization and that might cost them more in the long run. But what they're finding is that organizing at their stores is on the rise, despite, perhaps because of their stubborn resistance. Let's hope they see the light soon. Until they do, I'll see you on the picket line at Borders.

— Fred Chase, General Secretary-Treasurer

### Farewell, Fellow Worker

#### Bruce Sloan, 1912-1996

FW Bruce Sloan, who was active in auto organizing in the 1930s, died recently in Northern California. Shortly before his death he penned an "Open Letter to Politicians" summing up his credo:

"This is not my country. I am not an American, although I was born here 84 years ago... I'm a native, a citizen. I have worked hard for 66 years, raised a family of 5 children, paid my taxes, bought goods, voted, perhaps contributed a little to the general welfare. But it is not my country. I own no part of it. Mostly it is owned by others: corporations, big banks, the oil monopoly, insurance companies, large landholders, utilities, police forces, various spy agencies..."

0464) for more information on how you can help.

In the northwest, a Feb. 6 March for Justice will begin at 4 pm at Fireman's Park (7th and Pacific, Tacoma) to the U.S. Courthouse for a 5 p.m. rally. Other actions will happen across the country.

— Arthur J. Miller

### Industrial Worker Sustaining Fund

Robert Krzewinski, Ypsilanti MI	10.00
Mike Long, Washington DC	20.00
Ronald Lybarger, Plymouth OH	15.00
Bob Heald, Montpelier VT	50.00

### Utah Phillips Solidarity Fund

Karol Kucinski, Vinalhaven ME	15.00
Moiria Dolan, Austin TX	50.00

*Many thanks, fellow workers, for your generous support.*

### IWW Archives

The Archives of Labor & Urban Affairs at Wayne State University, the repository for the historical papers of the Industrial Workers of the World and many individual IWW members, actively seeks material relating to the history of the IWW. Anyone interested in donating material related to the IWW should contact: William LeFevre, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, 5401 Cass Avenue, Detroit, MI 48202. 313/577-4024. email: wlefevr@cms.cc.wayne.edu

### Give to the Sustaining Fund



## Hexcel workers strike against concessions

Workers of OCAW Local 2-591 (Utah) went on strike November 1st against Hexcel Corp. Hexcel manufactures graphite fiber for use in golf clubs, tennis rackets, fishing poles and rocket motors.

Hexcel, whose headquarters are located in Pleasanton, Calif., bought the plant from Hercules last summer. When they took the plant over they demanded from the workers a one-third reduction in wages, an increase in monthly health care costs from \$24 to \$90, scrapped the job seniority policy, and of course a loss of job security. Hexcel says the wages are in line with the average in this area, but the workers say it is definitely not in line with the job. Out of the 143 workers affected, 18 have gone back to work.

According to Gary Davenport, Secretary/Treasurer of the local and chief negotiator, the morale among the strikers is very good and community support is strong, especially one they are appraised of the issued. The strikers have set up tents across the street from the gates and are carrying on a seven-day, 24-hour picket. Wobs have been present on the line almost ever day, sometimes in double digit figures. Because of the show of solidarity, interest in the Wobs has got to the point that we might have some new dual carders in the union.

Recently the strikers were served an injunction which said they cannot have more than five picketers at each gate. The injunction was even served on 6 and 7 year olds who were walking the line with their parents. Some of the workers were hit by cars going in and out of the plant. One picketer who was hit filed an assault charge against the scab driver. When she went to follow up on the case, the courts/police couldn't find the paperwork. A courier that services the plant, Overnight Carrier, has been barreling through the picket lines. A picketer told one of the drivers (after stopping him) to slow down through the lines. He walked away, but the driver got out and pursued the picketer. A fight erupted in which the driver lost some teeth and received a black eye. Both were arrested and charged with assault.

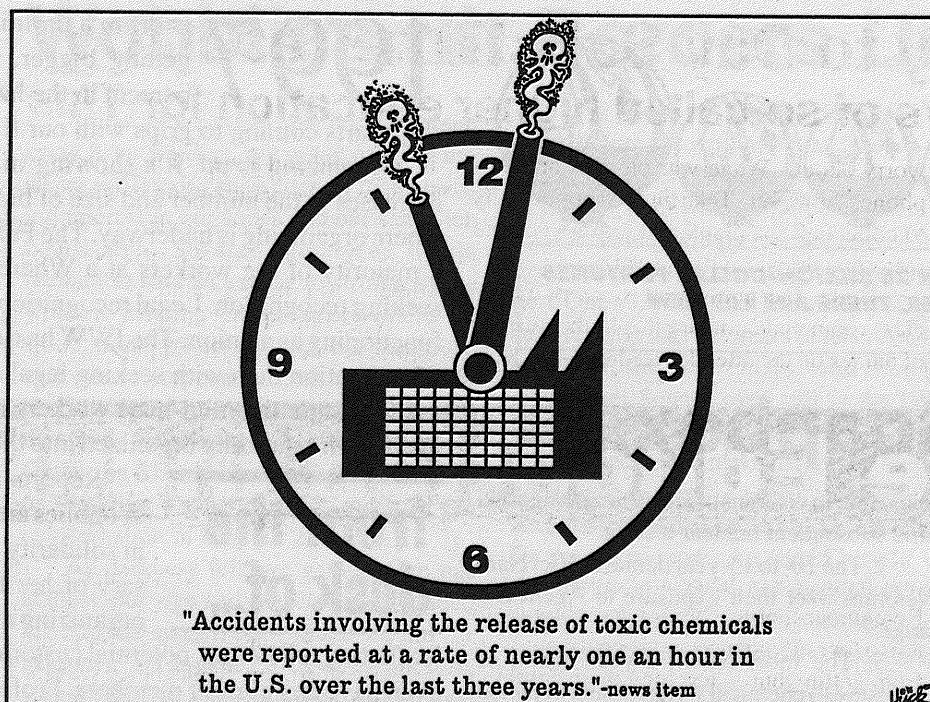
Hexcel also uses the 'race card' in keeping a hostile atmosphere for the strikers. By hiring a predominantly black security firm from Philadelphia (Eagle Security), the picketers feel unable to communicate their feelings toward scabbery. By keeping us fighting among ourselves, we have forgotten to look up at the true enemy. We're all in this fight together; black, white, brown or red. There certainly needs to be more diligence in practice of the often said statement, "An Injury to One is an Injury to All!"

As far as scabbing goes, two locals of the UFO-CIA - one a carpenters union, the other a millwright union - have crossed the picket lines and in some cases are actually doing some of the strikers' jobs. Signs have appeared in the neighborhoods of these scabs informing residents who these scabs are. If neighbors feel so inclined they can call or visit these 'honorable citizens' as their phone numbers and addresses are listed too.

Letters of support and strike fund donations can be sent to: OCAW Local 2-591, c/o Gary Davenport, 8773 S. Royal Crest Dr., W. Jordan UT 84088. Or call 801/280-2057 for strike updates and what you can do.

### Boycott Motts Clamato Juice

On November 27th the Ontario Federation of Labour endorsed a boycott of Motts Clamato Juice, produced by Cadbury's Beverages. Motts' St. Catharines plant is to be closed December 31, abandoning 165 members of UFCW Local 660A. Many long-service workers will be denied pension benefits when the company moves operations to Williamson, New York.



## One U.S. Chemical Accident an Hour

Accidents involving the release of toxic chemicals were reported at a rate of nearly one an hour over the last eight years, and many more likely went unreported, according to a study by the U.S. Public Interest Research Group and the National Environmental Law Center. "The daily barrage of chemical accidents in the United States adds to the toxic pollution that scientists believe may be linked to increasing rates of cancer, birth defects, reproductive dysfunction, immune suppression and other health problems in humans and wildlife," the report said.

Of the 20 accidents reported on the average day, at least one resulted in immediate injuries, evacuations or deaths. The actual rate likely was much higher, as many companies do not notify authorities as required.

## Salvadoran Unionist speaks in St. Louis

"In my factory 70 percent of the workers were under 14 years of age." A shocked St. Louis audience listened to Salvadoran unionist Ana Maria Romero, as she spoke through an interpreter about the horrors of working in a factory in a Salvadoran "free trade zone." She began working in a Korean-owned clothing factory in the zone in 1992 which manufactured garments for American companies.

The bosses constantly pressed workers to produce more, often forcing them into mandatory overtime that kept the mostly female workers in the factory until well after midnight. Since the buses do not run late at night, many workers were forced to spend the night sleeping on the factory floor.

Romero told of a co-worker who died of overwork. When her family tried to collect death benefits from the Salvadoran social security system they learned that although the company had been deducting social security taxes it had never registered her with the system or paid her taxes. Instead, the bosses simply pocketed workers' social security payments.

Outraged, Romero began studying for-

### World's glass unions network

Glass industries are globalising fast, and unions need to match this trend through worldwide networking. That was the main conclusion when the world's glass unions met Dec. 2 at the Brussels headquarters of the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM). Using computer links and other advanced techniques, the ICEM is currently building global networks of unionists within specific multinational companies across a range of materials, energy, process, extraction and environmental sectors. The networks provide rapid information on bargaining trends, corporate strategies and other issues within a given company, and can facilitate coordinated action when needed. In glass, the networking will concentrate on major multinationals Pilkington, Saint-Gobain and Owens-Illinois.

sign labor movements and became active in a union in her plant. She served first as a shop steward and then as an organizer for the Salvadoran textile workers union. The bosses replied to workers' growing militancy by declaring bankruptcy and fleeing the country without paying workers their legally required severance pay.

Romero said the FTZ factories manufactured garments for all major American brands, and called on U.S. workers to organize against their government (which helps companies ship work to countries like El Salvador which do not protect workers' rights) and the IMF, which is pressuring governments to open their countries to unlimited exploitation.

— Robert G. Rice

### Boycott Tower Records!

Three union activists were fired in early December at a Los Angeles Tower Records, one (a two-year employee) for a \$90 shortage, two for lying down during a store meeting. The three has been active in a failed drive to unionize the store last fall. The management, of course, denies that the firings were retaliatory, this being standard union-busting form.

Please email [feedback@towerrecords.com](mailto:feedback@towerrecords.com), demanding that Tower rehire the three and not fire any more employees for union activity, and state your intention to boycott Tower until they rehire the three.

### Shrinking paychecks

Here is some recently compiled data from the Economic Policy Institute that shows our real wages still not improving. Real wages have been in decline since the early 80's (CEOs are doin' great).

Average Hourly Pay	Sep 95	Aug 96	Sep 96
(Prod. Aug. 96 \$)	\$11.87	\$11.90	\$11.92
Median Hourly Wage Trends:			
Years	All	Male	Female
79-89	-2.4	-9.1	5.7
89-95	-4.6	-6.3	-1.7
Median F/T Weekly Pay:	1994:2	1996:2	
(age 25+, in 95:Q2\$)	\$528	\$518	

## NDP govt. betrays B.C. workers again

Many in the labour movement in British Columbia was delighted when the (union-backed) New Democratic Party government was re-elected last May. Since then, however, the NDP has slashed public spending by some \$113 million and seeks to extend the strike bans many swallowed during the election campaign as a "mere" political gambit. While B.C. unionists profess to be shocked at the developments, they have a familiar ring to workers from Canada's Ontario province, who voted out a NDP government in disgust at its union-busting and kowtowing to international capital.

But while the B.C. Federation of Labor recently approved a resolution condemning the cuts, it called not for widespread resistance (as in France or Ontario), but rather for negotiations on lay-off procedures and severance pay.

### Quebec workers fight back

Meanwhile, the Quebec Federation of Labour, traditionally one of the province's most cautious union centers, is threatening a general strike if the provincial government proceeds with plans to slash \$1.4 billion from public sector workers' pay and benefits. "We are not schoolchildren," QFL secretary-general Henri Masse said. "We are not here to test the government, but if they push us, we are ready to face the music, and not let this pass." Other unions are proposing joint action if the government insists on pushing the cuts through.

Over 500 members of the Quebec Federation of Nurses blocked traffic on one of Montreal's major highways Nov. 14 for half an hour as a protest against government threats to renege on public sector contracts. At the same time, student occupations were spreading across Quebec. Students occupied government offices and college campuses to protest funding cutbacks to higher education. Seven hundred students joined an occupation of a Montreal government office building Dec. 13th.

The Education Minister responded to student strikes with a divide-and-rule strategy that was immediately rejected by the student union.

Striking students in Quebec have been demanding five things: an end to the continued cuts to education; a tuition freeze; abolition of administrative fees; reversal in recent changes to the loans program and abolition of the Cote R. Of these demands, the Minister only addressed the tuition fee freeze, promising only to maintain it for Quebec residents. In addition, she announced a new tax on failed courses, and new ways to cut loans.

Students have decided not to let up in their efforts to fight for accessible education in Quebec. Undergraduate and graduate students at McGill held a one-day protest strike November 20.

## Herman new U.S. Secretary of Labor

U.S. President Bill Clinton has named Alexis Herman as the new Secretary of Labor, replacing Robert Reich. Like Reich, Herman has never held membership in a union. Rather, she has worked as a social services and government bureaucrat and until recently owned a business that did labor consulting for large corporations.

Since 1993 Herman has been director of Clinton's Public Liason Office. In that capacity, Atlantic Richfield's chief lobbyist says she was an advocate for corporate views. "The business community respects her and likes her," he said.

Unions, however, opposed her appointment, feeling the last thing they needed was another corporate voice in Washington.



## The Days of Day to Day Substitute Teaching – I went through 8 years of so-called higher education for *This*?

Ring, ring goes the alarm. Get up and get ready.

Ring, ring goes the phone. Pick it up.

"Sub center. Miss Pixler?"

"Yes."

"X high school."

"Yes."

Click.

If it's an unfamiliar school, get the address from the Chicago Public Schools directory and look up on a map. Pick up my stuff, including the emergency lesson plans if the teacher left nothing, put a couple pens and pencils in my pocket with my lunch money, put on my coat and move out the door. Lock my purse in the trunk. Drive to the school.

Can subs park in the school lot? Some schools yes, some schools, no. Best to park on the streets the first time. Where is the open door to the school? Schools have a lot of doors, but only one will be open from the outside - inevitably the one on the other side of the building from where I am parked. As a CPD employee, I don't have to go through the metal detector. Where is the school's main office? Usually on the first floor near the door, but don't count on that.

Get signed in and get my teacher's room assignment from the clerk. Which room? Who has the key? Where is the room - in most schools rooms are numbered consecutively, but a few have the even numbered rooms on one side of the building and the odd numbered ones on the other. Does the teacher have all her/his classes in same room? Does the teacher have division - the official head count for the day? If so, where am I to turn the division sheet? When does the school's first period start - this is not city-wide standard, it could be anytime from 7:30 to 8 AM. Teachers generally work periods 1- or 2- 8. When does the teacher's first class start? Ten minutes ago?

Make my way to the room - inevitably on the 4th floor and of course the elevators aren't working. Regardless of how rushed I am, mention to any security guards I pass that I am subbing for whom and in which room. Try not to look rushed, try to give the impression I am considering how many hours of detention to give everyone.

March into the classroom to the relief of who ever got roped into covering it until the sub arrived. Ignore the students' snickers "You're late," and with as much dignity as possibility drape my coat over the back of the teacher's chair. Covertly glance at the papers the clerk handed me for some clue for what subject I'm supposed to teach, while I announce my name and that I will be their teacher for this class. If there are only ten chairs in the class room, I have been handed the special education classes. Bat-ten down my emotional hatches. Also prepare for the worst if the regular teacher left a note to be especially firm with certain classes.

If the departing covering teacher didn't take attendance, get a sign-in sheet going around the room while I dig through the desk and file cabinet (if they are unlocked) for any trace of a lesson plan. Is there anything helpful on the board? Get the students busy doing something, if only writing three paragraphs describing what they did last weekend. They won't like it, correctly disdaining it as busy work, but any port in a storm.

Ignore the stuffed animals the students brought with them unless they start throwing them around the room. Ditto the helium balloons the girls like to bring in on their birthdays. The students aren't supposed to bring their coats into the class rooms, but chances are I will have worse things to

worry about. Wage war on caps and ear-phones, however. Take the first opportunity to collect all the chalk and erasers and put them in a drawer out of harm's way.

Count the number of students in the class room and compare this to the number of names on the attendance sheet - students

in one hand and a wad of newspaper in the other, will the panic button in the room call security, or will I have to leave the room to do so? Be careful not to turn my back on the students as I move around the room.

If a group of students start chanting the words to rap music, retreat to the desk and

## The Education Industry

may try to sign in their class cutting buddies. Remember that teacher's legal obligations are to take attendance and keep the students from getting hurt - teaching them anything is an extra. Anyway, they won't be interested in learning nothing from no subs - expletives deleted for the sensibilities of non-teachers.

"It's a sub! Let's party."

"Hey, lady, you got snot running down your nose."

"How can I watch my language? It's invisible."

"You just told me to stop talking because I'm black, right?"

"She threw it first!"

"Put *what* cards away?"

"No speakee English."

"Why should I take my feet off the desk? This is the nineties."

"Don't hit me, don't hit me!" (Don't tempt me, kiddo.)

"Hey, lady, you get paid whether you get chalk dust on your fingers or not."

"Don't blame me for taking the pencil sharpener apart, I didn't do it."

"Did you smoke pot back in the sixties?"

"Get the f--- out of my face, lady!"

"Our regular teacher lets us eat in class."

"Look, lady, there's someone at the door!" (This will also be a ploy every time except the one time when it's the principal checking up.)

Remember that I am being called upon to model calmness, patience, good manners and mature judgement. Remember also that if all things pass away, so will this class period. In the meantime, how many Spanish obscenities should I pretend I don't understand? Should I ignore the paper airplanes? The card game? The crap games? If a student starts waving a lit cigarette lighter

### British college unions strike

A one-day strike by over 100,000 higher education workers closed British universities and colleges 19 November. The shutdown was supported by simultaneous action by the National Union of Students. For the first time in the history of British higher education, the eight leading unions simultaneously balloted their members for industrial action in support of a pay claim. Members of all unions voted for strike action by large margins.

University staff lecturers, researchers, professors, administrators, librarians, computer and senior professional staff were offered an increase of less than 2 percent, which is a real pay cut. Yet, in the last five years they have taught 40 percent more students with 30 percent fewer resources. With funding to universities having been slashed back staff know a massive pay rise is pie-in the-sky, even though that is what they deserve. Nonetheless, universities can afford more.

Unfortunately, the major unions limited their demand to arbitration and token strikes, rather than mobilizing for an all-out fight to turn back years of cutbacks.

wait for them to finish. Tell them to get back to their class work. They won't, of course, but at least I won't have tried and publicly failed to stop them. Same if they start throwing a handball around the room or bouncing it off the walls - don't entertain them with futile attempts to grab it, bide my time until someone misses a catch.

Look over the papers the clerk gave me - how long are the class periods in this school? Usually 52 minutes, but some schools have 100 minute periods. The bells that mark the start and end of class may or may not be audible, making for some negotiations with the students over when class is over. The clock in the classroom may or may not work. If students want a pass to go to the washroom, make sure they leave books, coat, or class ring hostage in the room.

When does my teacher have her/his

"prep" period? Will I have it free or will I be expected to spend it filing detention slips in the main office? Where is the faculty washroom? Is it locked? Who has the key? The faculty washroom is the only one in which I can be sure there will be doors to the toilet stalls, toilet paper, soap and paper towels. What time do I have lunch and where is the lunch room? The food will range from "not bad" to "forget it, I'll eat when I get home."

In the faculty lunch room I can at least amuse myself by asking the biology teachers what they teach about evolution and watch them squirm as they explain why it's not really an important part of biology.

Last Bell. Here's to tomorrow and a better day. Be sure when I sign out to record the ID number of the class. I am subbing for, in my notebook, so if/when the Board of Education shorts my paycheck, I can send in a properly filled-out payroll error form.

The carrot in all this is this is the illusion that if the administrators in the different schools know me as a sub, they will be more likely to hire me when a regular teaching position opens up in physics. The second illusion is that when I get a regular position, I can actually teach the students something and not just be a glorified baby sitter. As for the system, it's remarkable that the drop out rate among Chicago students - 45% - so closely corresponds to the teacher turnover rate - 50% every five years. Apparently neither the students nor teachers can stand it.

plp

## U Cal Wobs honor picket lines

During the November 20 - 22 AGSE/UAW strike at the University of California Berkeley campus (in coordination with the other UCs, particularly Los Angeles & San Diego), the workers in the ASUC (Berkeley) Recycling and Composting Collectives (IWW Education Workers Industrial Union 620) will honor the strike by not crossing the picket line. No recycling or composting took place on the Berkeley campus during the AGSE/UAW strike.

UC Berkeley recycling workers have been represented by the IWW for several years. The University refuses to acknowledge that it employs them or to negotiate its attacks on their pay and working conditions.

The IWW was the only union to honor the picketlines. Although the AGSE is part of a Coalition of UC Unions (workers are divided into a jigsaw quilt of different unions and locals), the other unions have signed no-strike agreements obliging them to scab on

their fellow workers.

Some 2,500 TAs struck on the three campuses. Student Association of Graduate Employees (SAGE/UAW) members at UCLA struck November 18th. Members of the Association of Student Employees (ASE/UAW) at the University of California, San Diego struck the next day. AGSE/UAW members at Berkeley joined the strike on the 20th. AGSE/UAW has been seeking collective bargaining rights since 1983.

A Public Employment Relations Board judge ruled in September that TAs, readers and tutors at UCLA do have collective bargaining rights. Administrators have refused to comply with the ruling. The UC administration has already spent millions of dollars in public funds on its legal efforts to resist collective bargaining for academic student employees. If administrators continue to refuse to negotiate, further strike action is planned for this Spring.

benefits. The positions would be seasonal, not year round like other union jobs at Yale.

HERE had formed an alliance with the Graduate Employees & Students Organization, which represents Yale teaching assistants. However, HERE left the TAs hanging by HERE when Yale responded to a grade strike (TAs met all classes, but refused to issue final grades) with mass firings. The settlement finalizes their abandonment.

However, the National Labor Relations Board has charged Yale with unfair labor practices in its efforts to break the TA union, ruling that TAs are workers; and that grade strikes are a protected activity.

The NLRB General Counsel has determined that Yale teaching assistants are employees under federal law and have full rights to collective bargaining. For years, administrators at Yale and elsewhere have argued that graduate teachers are primarily students and therefore have no right to unionize. The General Counsel's decision definitively rejects this argument. In so doing, the decision opens the way for an increase in

*continued on page 14*

## Yale Settles

Yale University and HERE have settled one of the most bitter labor-management relationships in higher education, with a contract that gives Yale the right to subcontract work while guaranteeing existing union workers their jobs for 10 years. The university also agreed not to cut the number of full-time jobs by more than 20 percent over that period. The settlement ended a 13-month dispute that involved two month-long strikes.

HERE abandoned a provision in the last contract that barred Yale from hiring subcontractors to do work traditionally done by the 1,100 dining hall workers, maintenance workers, plumbers, electricians and custodians in Local 35. Yale can now hire out many of these jobs and will be allowed to bring in private contractors to run four fast-food outlets on campus.

Although employees at the fast-food establishments would be union members, they would be paid \$7 an hour - much less than the \$12 an hour that many dining hall workers make - and would not receive



# The Empire's New Clothes: You Can't Eat Gucci

As the New Year approaches, I cannot help but remember the anniversary of the freeing of prices in Moscow. It's been five years since the union was signed away and almost five years ago, on Jan. 2, 1992, Russians entered a new phase in their daily existence. The state would no longer control prices on goods, save basic food items. Russia, we were told, was making the final transition to a market economy.

On that day in 1992, like hundreds of days before it, the street was lined with speculators. Scores of people, mostly women, lined the street offering the contents of the now emptied stores. Having gone in and purchased cheese at yesterday's prices, having literally bought out the store, there was no place for consumers to go except to them; if they were rich enough, they could pay their prices. If not, screw them, let them run around the city for what they need. This continued for some time, until a good network of wholesale distributors developed, private supermarkets began to spring up and the prices in the "state stores," now often carrying many Western products, reached and, in many cases, surpassed world levels.

Of course these people could hardly be blamed. After all, wages at that time were about \$10 a month. And they had learned

about that way of business from the system they had grown up in, a corrupt, insensitive form of monopoly capitalism.

The market is hardly "free" today. Byzantine laws and tax structures lend to corruption, which kills competition and drives up prices. If there is a scarcity of goods, if opening businesses are risky, if they must be done with all capital up front (due to lack of credit structures), if all major purchases have to be made in cash, then of course there is both a motivation for and a way to gauge prices to astronomical levels. It has not been unheard of that sellers of goods and services which try to offer better prices to consumers and simply run out of business by the mafia, or by the tax police, which they can rarely afford to bribe. There are thus many mini-monopolies and real ones that control the market.

(One example are the phone racketeers. It is difficult, near impossible to get a city phone (which, for now, has free local service, although that's changing) installed. The price for such a rush installation (where you don't wait for years in line) is about \$3,000. Or you can go to the telephone mafia, which of course is run by people who give kickbacks to the government, to the phone company, and charge you \$1,000 for a cellular phone, plus exorbitant fees for

service and airtime. This is a market where you can make money by offering competitive rates, but those firms that tried it were forced to close. This is a slight improvement over the situation in Nigeria, where apparently people were killed for trying to offer cheaper phone service.

And although some prices seem competitive on the world market, they are outrageous given the standard of living. The average wage in Russia is about \$150 a month. The wage gap is enormous.

## Millionaires and starvation

Moscow has a lot of millionaires and a small middle class. But even the middle class is poor. What is the middle class? Well, recently we had a discussion with a Russian girl in New York, and of course the fact that she was in NYC means that she is above average in income. She maintained that young people live quite well, that anyone can earn at least \$300 a month in Moscow—which should upset half of my friends, some of whom are looking for such great jobs. Yet plenty of young people, if they have the right background, do make that. What is important is that such an income could be considered a good income.

It's poverty! The only reason that people can live on such wages is that the majority of people still have relatively cheap housing and are simply used to living in cramped conditions. Once you don't have that though, you can find yourself in such a situation that you'd love to find an apartment for only \$300 a month. This kind of money is good for people like the American teenagers who work McJobs after school to pay for clothes and the movies. And usually, this is exactly how these young people tend to spend their money. Only these people are a bit older and, surprisingly, you see that these jobs they occupy are not McJobs, but rather responsible positions. In reality this is one way the bosses are keeping wages down, by taking on young people and making older workers feel the competition. After all, few older workers have experience which is very valuable in today's market.

It's time again for my annual report on consumer prices, adjusted to take into account the relative price. I'll use \$150 as the standard, but you can cut the prices in half to see just how well a Russian with a good salary lives.

We take the average annual wage in Russia to be \$1,800. Let's compare this with an American wage worker that takes home \$18,000 a year. Prices should therefore be multiplied by ten to reflect the relative cost. (I've generally taken the lowest possible prices.)

Item	Real Cost	Relative Cost
pair winter boots	\$50	\$500
one Big Mac	\$2	\$20
pay phone call	37 cents	\$3.70
buy 1-room apt.	\$40,000	\$400,000
loaf of bread	50 cents	\$5
tomatoes	\$2.50/k.	\$25/k.
bottle of beer	\$1	\$10
transport pass (m)	\$43	\$430
winter coat	\$100	\$1000
cinema ticket	\$3	\$30
xerox copy	12 cents	\$1.20

Well, you get the picture. If you compare this to my previous figures, you can become an optimist like Gaidar and say that the economy is improving! Yeah, no kidding. Of course they have to keep some minimal level of consumption. That's the first thing that people do when they get a little money. What are they gonna do—save it? For what? A flat?

The new Russians are happy with their Gucci stores and Planet Hollywood. (Actually, even the fat head mafiosi can't stand their \$17 hamburgers.) This is what the market ideologists want us to see.

The worst person playing the game is Mayor Luzhkov, whose public image as benevolent father can be compared to Stalin's, who is in fact the head of several mafias, who uses his power to distribute property to himself and his friends, an absolutely evil man. Luzhkov the merry maker, who ordered stores to decorate for X-mas or face a fine, who concludes real estate deals like normal people make phone calls, who is gentrifying Moscow. He wants the world to see a beautiful rich Moscow, so he makes threats against local business people so that they build a cathedral. Just like the czars. And he likes Zurab Tsereteli, so he pays him millions upon millions of dollars to construct hideous statue after hideous statue. Like Moscow really needs this hideous 16-storey tall statue of Peter the Great, which costs millions of dollars. How many millions of dollars are owed in wage arrears?

The public is apparently mesmerized by the empire's new clothes. But sooner or later, the people are gonna understand that they can't eat Gucci. A lot of people understand this already, they just don't know what they can do about it.

— Akai, Moscow

## French truckers win shorter hours

Jubilant truckers lifted the barricades Nov. 29 to end the 12-day siege of France yesterday after forcing the government to accept a settlement giving them most of what they wanted.

The 12-day conflict caused chaos on both sides of the English Channel as the strikers blocked roads, ports, oil refineries and fuel depots across France, forcing factories to close and disrupting commerce. Truckers will be allowed to retire at age 55, will receive an extra five days per year in sick pay, can not be required to work Sundays, and will be paid for time spent waiting and resting.

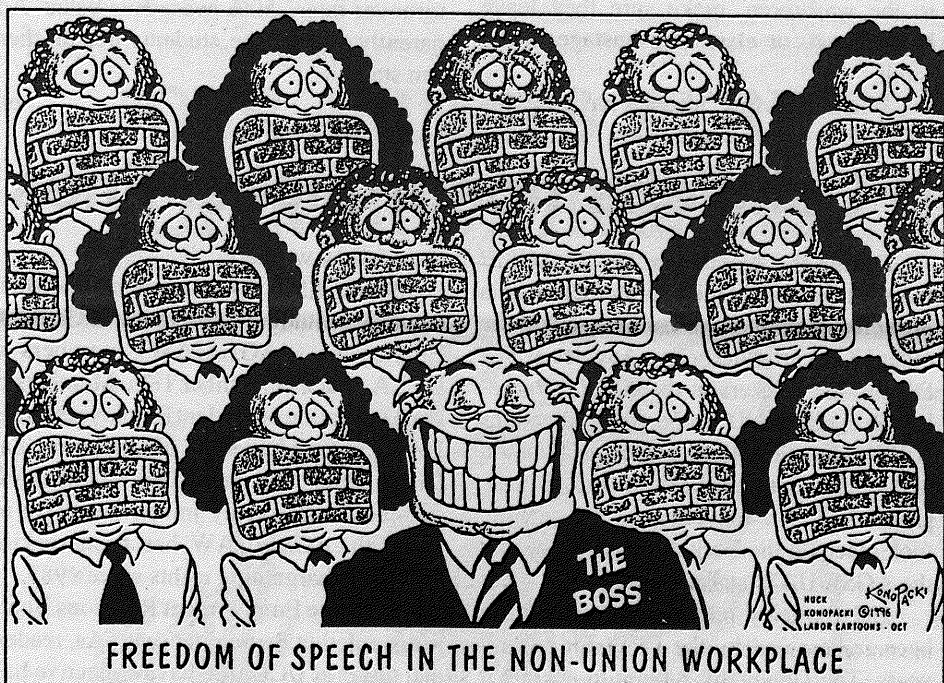
"They won," was the banner headline of the Communist party daily *L'Humanite*, echoed by the left-wing daily *Liberation*, which said the strike proved "struggle pays." But French employers fear the successful strike will embolden other workers to fight for better conditions and undercut the government's austerity program.

It was the third time in four years that determined strikers have forced a conservative French government to retreat. In 1993 it was Air France workers who forced the scrapping of a rescue plan for the loss-making airline involving job cuts. Last year, transport workers forced Juppe to withdraw a plan to streamline the indebted SNCF state railways and make public employees work longer for a full pension.

## Greek strike hits austerity scheme

Greek doctors, civil servants, diplomats and seamen stopped work Dec. 17 to protest the ruling socialists' 1997 austerity budget. Civil servants marched on parliament, causing traffic chaos in the heart of the capital. Seaman pressed on with a two-day strike, halting commercial transport and tourist ferries, and making a 20-day farmers' road blockade tougher to circumvent.

Strikes and work stoppages have reverberated daily with chants of groups of disgruntled workers since Simitis unveiled his budget. Workers have demanded better pensions, higher minimum wages and expressed outrage at heavier taxation. The socialists have boosted indirect taxes on items such as alcohol and swept away hundreds of tax exemptions.



## Caterpillar: Corporate Outlaw

When you look at their behavior pattern, it's pretty obvious that Caterpillar's top executives think that the laws should apply to everyone but them. In its reprisals against workers who support the union, Cat has broken the record for the most unfair labor practice complaints in a single dispute; the NLRB has investigated and issued complaints covering over 300 separate charges of labor law violations.

The most recent charges are contained in a new complaint from the National Labor Relations Board, which cites some 150 separate instances in which the company violated the legal rights of UAW members since they returned to work in December 1995. The new charges are in addition to 220 ULP complaints previously issued against Caterpillar.

The complaint cites case after case in which the company "coerced, intimidated, threatened and harassed" its own workers, including more than 120 separate instances in which Caterpillar workers were unlawfully suspended, discharged or forced to retire from their jobs. More than 160 supervisors from virtually every UAW-represented facility are named in the NLRB complaint as having engaged in illegal anti-union activity.

The NLRB complaint calls on Caterpillar to revoke its "Standards of Conduct,"

which impose draconian restrictions on workers' right to speak or display union insignia. Details cited in the NLRB complaint included the following:

Cat "harassed, coerced and intimidated [a named employee] by placing him under constant surveillance and intense scrutiny and prohibiting him from talking to other employees because of his union membership and activities."

Cat "coerced and threatened employees by utilizing three security guards to 'walk out' [a named employee], follow him out to his parked automobile and videotape him after he was suspended because of his union membership and activities."

Cat "told an employee that the next time he wore anything that reminded [a manager] of the strike, he would be terminated."

Cat "prohibited its employees from wearing a small button which reads 'UAW member'."

Cat "prohibited employees from wearing union-supportive attire bearing slogans such as 'UAW USA Proud' and 'Local 974 Member in Good Standing'."

Cat "threatened returning employees from strike with discharge if they did not remove union stickers from tool boxes."

Cat "established higher production standards for employees returning from strike than required for other employees."



## International solidarity with Mersey dockers...

*continued from page 1*

—the other Mersey dockers struck in solidarity with them) would have received nothing. Most of the work would have continued to be done by scabs. The company announced that if their “offer” was rejected they would not return to the bargaining table.

International solidarity continued growing. Dockworkers in the Mexican port of Veracruz stopped work Dec. 4 in solidarity with the Mersey dockers. Swedish dockers have hit the ACL line (which does extensive shipping out of the Mersey port) for 12 hours every week since the summer. Danish dockers struck in solidarity with Liverpool in October. Le Havre held up an OOCL vessel for sixteen hours and hosted the recent international dockers’ meeting, and the German OTV union Congress resolved to put industrial pressure on Mersey Docks and shipping lines calling at Liverpool.

When ACL pulled out from Liverpool for four weeks last summer, Mersey Docks was in a panic. Now, despite their poor share price and increasingly bad press, the company continues to put on a brave face. If ACL, CAST, CanMar, ZIM, Andrew Weir or Gracechurch were to pull out now, MDHC would be back behind the eight ball. But that can only happen when shipping lines discover they are all in trouble half way round the world after visiting a scab port.

Fifteen months into the lock-out, Mersey Docks thought Liverpool dockers were looking for any way out. But in fact, as one rank and file docker put it last week, “I find I’m getting stronger and more determined to win this, to make sure that we go back. I will admit that I do get disillusioned at times, especially when I go down the picket line and see three ships there. I say to myself, ‘is this working, this international set up?’ And I think everybody must ask themselves that question.

“But when you go round the country and see the commitment that people have for you, you owe it to them as well to win a victory, not only for ourselves but for other trade unionists. In Sweden, the dockers took me down and showed me the ACL coming in, took a note of the time, and took me back the next day and said, ‘there is the ACL line there, no work being carried out and it won’t start until twelve hours after it docked.’

“So I have seen it in operation, and I think it is tremendous that anybody can give that support to somebody in another country, and I only hope that we will be able to return the favour to those people that supported us.

“I want to see the scabs out of the port, and I want to see the men back that want to go back, and I want to see the union back in there calling the shots, and let’s have decent conditions. That’s what I want to see in the port of Liverpool.”

Please fax messages of support and pledges of industrial action to (+44) 151-207 0696 and copy them by email to [chrisbailey@gn.apc.org](mailto:chrisbailey@gn.apc.org)

### Mersey dockers interview

**Jimmy:** I’m 60 years of age, and I can get a pension and that, but all I want out of there is the scabs, that’s the first thing. My father actually got killed on the docks, my brother was down there, my grandfather and everything, so I’m one of them that won’t give in...

**Steve:** We’ve had a talk many a day down on the Alex gate and we have our Doctor Doom’s among us. People get disheartened saying “oh well we’ve been down these docks 14 months now and what’s the



*Solidarity • March 9, 1927*

outcome?” None of us know the outcome, but we know that we’ve got nowhere else to go.

I mean there are certain guys saying if they upped this offer now to maybe 35, they’ll snatch their hand off if it comes to a ballot. Well I say we’ve lost near enough that much in the 14 months we’ve been out of work, so we’d be paying ourselves to disappear from this dock dispute and doing the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company a favour. And the thing is, those scabs in there are going to earn that in the next 12 months, we’ve got to live off that severance and feed our families for the rest of our lives if we don’t touch for any more work outside the dock gate. But the likes of me, Jimmy and the lads who are sitting around here now, we’re resilient, we’ve just got to buck those up that are getting disheartened.

**Brian:** As it’s gone on for nearly 15 months now, I’m actually getting stronger, not weaker. I decided from the off to get involved in the dispute and play a positive part, so I put myself down for delegations. And when you go round the country and see the commitment that people have for you, you owe it to them to win a victory not only for ourselves but for other trade unionists.

I want to see the scabs out of the port, I want to see the men back that want to go back, and I want to see the union back in there calling the shots, and let’s have decent conditions. That’s what I want.

**Jimmy:** If anything does happen to us and we do move away from that dock gate, every man jack working for the Dock Board is gonna get a new contract of low wages. The Port Police are gonna get sacked, and there’ll be Expo or someone in their place. So we’re actually fighting for those men’s jobs who are working in there, besides our own, so I think they should even be proud of us, ‘cos we’re not proud of them.

**LabourNet:** What makes you think it’s possible to win?

**Steve:** It’s just a gut feeling that they are starting to crumble a little bit inside those dock gates. I think there is a bit of turmoil going on now it’s actually getting to them, and I feel that we’re on the turning point and we’ve just got to stay where we are and “Hold the Line” and I think we’ll get the result.

**Brian:** It’s the commitment of the men that is going to make us win. They might

moan and groan down on the picket line and it’s only natural after 14 or 15 months, but, you hear them here at the meeting, and if there’s anything that comes out, they’re very supportive of what the shop stewards say so the men’s commitment is still there and that’s what’s going to win it for us.

**LabourNet:** There are workers in this country who could, in theory, take action in support. What would you say to them?

**Brian:** I’d say to them to get on board, because as we’ve always said right the way throughout this strike, victory for us isn’t only a victory for us, it’s gonna be a victory for everybody. Because the conditions that they did actually impose upon us when we were in them gates are beginning to creep in to other industries. And since them days it’s snowballed, and I think it’s crucial for the trade union movement that we win this. It’s gonna give everybody inspiration, and I think it will affect the course of industrial relations in the future.

We want physical support. We want people now to have the guts to come out and say “What’s happened to those Liverpool dockers is wrong,” and any other workers

## Wharfies ban Indonesian ship

Waterside workers and port employees in Darwin, Australia, have placed a 24-hour ban on the Indonesian flag vessel *Fajar Kanguru* Dec. 17. The ban is part of the union’s national protest against the detention and trials of Indonesian union leaders Muchtar Pakpahan and Dita Sari now under way in Jakarta.

In a circular to branches the MUA union called on branches to step up action against Indonesian trade. The bans first got under way in September in protest against the detention of the two independent union leaders. Sporadic action continued over the months affecting a total of 13 ships to date. The last action was in Newcastle on December 14.

“The Suharto Government is using the subversion laws to crush, imprison and possibly even execute any of its opponents engaged in peaceful, legitimate political and labour activity,” said MUA Joint National Secretary John Coombs. “There is no prospect of Mr Pakpahan or Ms Sari receiving a fair trial.”

that’s been sacked as well. And get on board and say “Well ok, we send containers to there. They’re not going there.” Drivers to have the balls to do what the French drivers done and say “No, we’re not going across a picket line.” We want to get back to the days when workers supported workers, and that’s the only way that workers are gonna win things.

**LabourNet:** What’s holding people back?

**Brian:** Economic fear.

**Jimmy:** They’re frightened because they know there’s someone there to take their job, the minute they look round the corner.

**Brian:** See the idea that they’re frightened of losing their jobs by taking action, they’re still gonna lose their jobs anyway because they’re frightened to take action. All they want in the docks is ‘yes men’ who jump through hoops. So they’ve got to show that they’re strong. And they should’ve come on board with us from the very off. If everyone in that port had supported us that strike wouldn’t have lasted a couple of weeks.

**Steve:** I’m very confident that we’ll get a result, now whether that result is total reinstatement, which is what we’re striving for, I don’t know. But I’m very optimistic that we will win this battle....

**Jimmy:** All I want is the lads who want to go back, to go back, because the likes of me, I don’t want to go back. It suits me to retire. But the lads who want to go back, they’ve got to go back. If we split, that’s it. Even the kids, they’ve got to go back.

**Brian:** The settlement of this dispute has got to involve everybody. Otherwise we’ve been taking this action for 15 months for nothing. So there’s no way that a deal can be sorted without Torside, Nelson Freight, and all the other parts, it’s got to involve everybody.

**Steve:** On a personal level, I’ve been on the docks since the day I left school and I’ve never been unemployed in my life until this dispute started, and we’re talking 28 years. And I’ve enjoyed working on the docks, I’ve learnt a lot off a lot of fellas, I’ve learned to develop a lot of friendships with the people down there, and I don’t think that I should be torn away from those docks over this dispute and the way we were set up. I know there’s a living for me down on them docks and I want to go back to it.

## Flores Magon bus union under attack

The Mexican state government of Yucatan is depriving members of the “Ricardo Flores Magon” union of their labor rights, and unlawfully refusing to register their union. The bus drivers were fired October 12th, after forming the independent Magon union and demanding that the government recognize and negotiate with it. Workers responded with an encampment in the main square of Merida city. The government has evicted union members from their encampment and threatened to jail them if they persist in their struggle to organize in a union of their own choosing.

The union asks that messages be sent to Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo (e-mail: [webadmon@op.presidencia.gob.mx](mailto:webadmon@op.presidencia.gob.mx)) demanding that he respect the freedom of labour association for the workers of the “Ricardo Flores Magon” Union at Merida, Yucatan; holding him responsible for any aggression against those workers by the state police or other bullies or gang forces; and demanding that negotiations open.

**SUPPORT THE WORKERS’ PRESS**  
Give to the Sustaining Fund



# Stitching Shoes 12 Hours a Day For \$75 a Month

Workers in Nike's factory in Saigon, Vietnam, are paid an average of 20 cents per hour, and subjected to physical assaults and other abuse. Conditions are no better in Nike plants in China and Indonesia, or in those of its competitors.

23-year-old He Sau Yen stitches sports shoes for a company called 'Nority' in the Chinese city of Shenzhen. She is paid just 600 yuan (\$75) a month for working a 12-hour day, six days a week. She stitches the uppers of brand names that include the U.S. corporation, Reebok.

She works for one of several companies in China supplying products for brand names in Europe and the United States to specifications laid down by the separate foreign company. The Hongyun Toys Company, for example, makes plastic dolls for Lucky Industrial Holdings of Hong Kong. The dolls are sold in the United States, Germany and Scandinavia under brand names such as 'Fashion Corner' and 'Dreamland.' The 700 or more workers are paid \$88 dollars a month including overtime, and receive subsidised housing.

Chinese labor law says that the work week should not exceed 44 hours and overtime, which must be voluntary, should be no more than another 36 hours a month. But the law is generally ignored, and many workers are forced to put in 70 hours a week or more.

With such long working hours it is not surprising that there are safety problems at

some Chinese factories. A fire at a Christmas ornament factory in Shenzhen last January killed 20 people and injured another 89.

Unions, other than the official Communist Party trade union, are banned in China. Workers who try to organize independent trade unions can be charged with subversion and sentenced to death.

Even so the official All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) reports a sharp increase in labour disputes. There were 150,000 labour disputes in China in 1995, double the number two years before, and the number is still rising.

## Guess sues labor activists

Guess Inc. — a leading manufacturer of high-end jeans manufactured in sweatshops in the U.S. and south of the border by underpaid workers threatened with firing when they organize for better conditions — has sued UNITE (the AFL-CIO affiliated garment workers union) and Common Threads. Common Thread's main crime was organizing and carrying out a literary reading in support of illegally fired GUESS workers at Midnight Special Bookstore in Santa Monica. Poet Julia Stein and writer Mary Helen Ponce read their work and one of the fired garment workers spoke. This lawsuit is part of a campaign of intimidation against artists, community groups and garment workers who are opposing sweatshop conditions found in contracting shops sew-

ing for Guess.

The National Labor Relations Board has charged Guess with illegally firing nearly 20 employees for supporting the UNITE organizing drive. Guess was recently taken off the Department of Labor's "Trendsetter List" after an October review found numerous minimum wage and overtime violations. Guess' number is 800-39GUESS — please let them know what you think.

## 3,000 garment workers in Cambodia's first strike

Nearly 3,000 garment workers walked off their jobs Dec. 17th in the first labor strike in Cambodia's modern history. The mostly women workers were protesting poor pay and bad working conditions at the Cambodia Garment Co. and attempts by authorities to break up their newly formed union.

Three union leaders were detained, suspended and told they would be fired after the union presented its demands. Security guards also fired on workers holding a demonstration outside the factory.

The Free Trade Union of Khmer Workers is calling for minimum monthly salaries of \$50 and a 40-hour work week.

"My salary is \$30 a month, so I only earn \$1 a day," said Khuan Sothoin, 23, who sews shirts and trousers 12 hours a day, seven days a week. "When I make a mistake, they penalize me \$4." She said Chi-

nese floor managers hit the women when their work is not satisfactory, or put pants or shirts on their heads to humiliate them.

## The cost of Barbies

The World Development Movement (WDM), with the TUC and the Catholic Institute for International Relations, are appealing to shoppers in Britain to hand into toyshops cards bearing the slogan "Fair play for toy workers." The targets of their campaign are factories in China and the Dynamic factory outside Bangkok, Thailand.

Several workers at the Dynamic factory are survivors of the Kader fire, which killed 189 workers who made Cabbage Patch dolls. Supan (not her real name) said: "I still get nightmares. The factory floor here is a big mess. We are crowded in with sewing machines with only a narrow passage in between. The fire exits are blocked ..."

Nearly all workers are on continual temporary contracts, working for three or four months before being forced to resign and then reapply for their jobs. That way, the company doesn't have to pay for holidays or sick leave. The factory also ignores the legal minimum wage of \$6 (£3.50) a day.

The Barbie dolls are made to order by the US toy giant Mattel, which boasted sales of \$2.3 billion last year. A Baywatch Barbie doll in London this Christmas costs £18.99, and a cuddly dalmatian £13.99. The WDM calculates that Mattel earns as much from British sales of Barbie in one hour as it pays 5,000 workers in Thailand.

## UFW organizing strawberry workers

Gonzalo Zamora needs a decent health insurance plan for his two children. He'd like a raise from his \$4.60 an hour base pay. And he'd like to vote in a union election without fearing his company might go out of business afterward. "The government doesn't want us to use public health services anymore," the Mexican immigrant said in Spanish, eyes blazing with frustration. "But what choice do we have if we can't earn a living wage?"

The United Farm Workers union is working to organize 20,000 workers who pick 75 percent of the nation's strawberries. The UFW sent dozens of organizers into fields earlier this year and has launched a national campaign to publicize abysmal conditions and growers' intimidation.

The union is trying to avoid a repeat of an election it held in August 1995. Nearly 90 percent of 400 strawberry pickers at VCNM Farms in Salinas voted for UFW representation, eager for a seniority system, medical benefits, and an end to sex harassment of women workers. The company destroyed a quarter of its crop the following week, and shut down the next month, dismissing all its employees.

Wages have remained generally stagnant for a decade, falling from an average \$6.40 an hour in 1985 (\$9.10 in inflation-adjusted dollars) to just \$6 today. Workers typically put in 10 hours a day of stoop labor, earning only about \$8,500 over the 7-month season.

Since many workers are undocumented, and work on a day-to-day basis, it's easy to fire union supporters and to replace those workers unafraid to stand up for their rights. Workers are exposed to toxic pesticides in the fields. In 1991, more than 100 Mexican migrants, some as young as 13, were found living in cardboard boxes and caves dug into hillsides near Salinas. They were not being paid the state minimum wage.

The UFW estimates it would cost just 5 cents per pint to restore wages to the level paid ten years ago.

# "OUR ANIMALS WERE TREATED BETTER THAN MOST HUMANS...IN THE WORLD!"

-Disney's 101 Dalmations press kit

## UNBELIEVABLE!

"DURING FILMING, THE DOGS WHO STARRED IN DISNEY'S 101 DALMATIANS WERE VERY WELL TAKEN CARE OF. THEY STAYED IN SMALL DOG MOTELS, HAD ROUND-THE-CLOCK CARE, AND HAD PERSONAL TRAINERS."

-McDonald's 101 Dalmatian toy package

## "GREAT

## EXPLOITATIONS!

IN HAITI, WOMEN SEWING DISNEY'S 101 DALMATIANS CHILDREN'S CLOTHING ARE PAID STARVATION WAGES OF SIX CENTS FOR EVERY \$19.99 GARMENT THEY SEW."

-National Labor Committee

## "PHENOMENAL MISERY!"

FOR THE LAST YEAR, DISNEY'S CHILDREN'S CLOTHING HAS BEEN PRODUCED IN BURMA, IN A FACTORY LARGELY OWNED BY THE RUTHLESS MILITARY DICTATORS. AVERAGE WAGES IN BURMA ARE SIX CENTS AN HOUR, THE AVERAGE WORK WEEK IS 60 HOURS!"

-National Labor Committee



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: NATIONAL LABOR COMMITTEE, 275 SEVENTH AVE. NY, NY 10001 212/242-3002



# Miriam Fried: Working at Borders

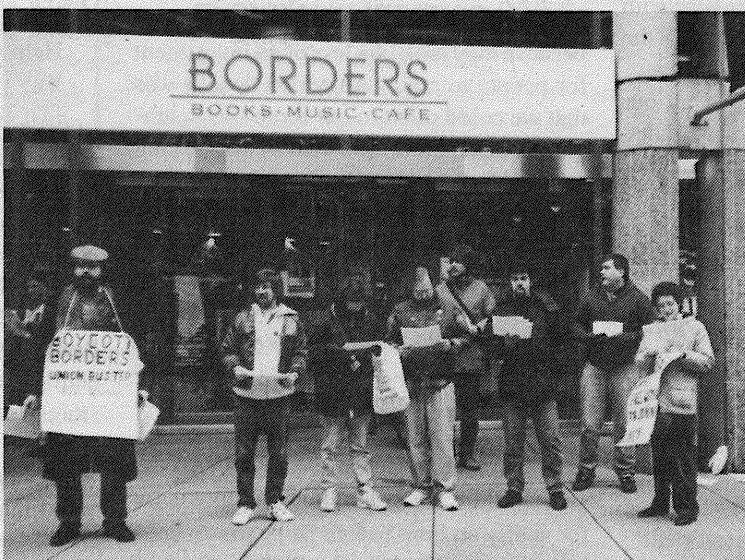
*The following statement was read at the Boston protest action:*

When I got a job at Borders Book Shop soon after moving to Philadelphia, I was delighted. In the months that followed, I found that I loved working with books alongside a group of smart, creative co-workers. But I also noticed that as time went by, things were changing at the store. The formerly worker-friendly company was expanding by the minute, but their cost cutting maneuvers were made at the expense of us booksellers. As the character of the store shifted toward a more typically centralized and regimented retail environment, we took a close look at our wages (\$6.25 to start), raise structure (about 25-30 cents a year) and hours (the definition of "full time" was shrinking). We decided to protect ourselves with an Industrial Workers of the World union drive, fighting for adequate wages and greater dignity within the bookstore we loved.

I was on the union's organizing committee and did everything I would to publicly promote unionization, including speaking out at captive meetings to General Manager Dave Stewart, President Rich Flanagan, and VP Ann Kubek, creating flyers, and contacting other stores to spread union news. My name and phone number was posted on the wall near the break room in a list of pro-union employees who could provide union information. After the election, I continued to organize. That's why Borders managers and workers knew me as one of the most pro-union workers there.

At the same time, my work record was near perfect. I had worked there for almost

a year and was committed to doing the best job I could. I was never written up or given "warnings." Performance evaluations described me as "one of our best booksellers": and "a fine model for other booksellers" who "should feel free to propose improvements at all levels of store operation." But when I took Borders managers up on this suggestion, I was soon out of a job. They took to opportunity to punish me for my organizing activities.



Boston Wobs and supporters picketing Borders Dec. 14th

On Saturday, June 15, I was fired by Mr. Stewart during a discussion of a cash register policy that most booksellers never enforced.

He called me into his office to discuss a concern I'd raised with an assistant manager: that I was one of only a few booksellers enforcing strict policies such as the one requiring matching addresses for check acceptance, and that managers didn't seem to be backing that enforcement either. I explained that most of my co-workers were aware of managers' lack of concern for policies such as this one and as a result no longer enforced them. I said that though I'd been a lone holdout, I might stop being unnecessarily strict and join them. According to Mr. Stewart that was ground for dismissal. When I answered "I don't know" to his unexpected ultimatum, he told me that I was no longer welcome to work there, and just 20 minutes later posted a sign announcing that I was no longer employed by Borders. I'd broken no rules, and had become the first Borders Philadelphia employee to

be fired since an incident years ago when someone was caught stealing.

It was clear that my good job performance was less important than the "threat" posed by talking union.

When I claimed unemployment, Mr. Stewart attempted to deny my claim, even though the questionnaire he had to fill out for the unemployment commission forced him to admit that I'd broken no rules.

The unemployment commission ruled in my favor, and I received checks in the amount of \$133 per week for three weeks. Then I got a new job and stopped receiving the benefits. But Borders retained the well-known union-busting law firm of Jackson, Lewis, Schnitzler and Krupman to appeal the ruling, and got the decision reversed. That's still under appeal. My unfair labor practice charge is pending at the National Labor Relations Board, as Borders brings out the big guns to fight our all-volunteer effort.

## NLRB pursues Back-to-Work order for Wobbly organizer

Michell Heim, an IWW organizer fired by Sears on August 16, has won a victory. The National Labor Relations Board is pursuing an injunction for 10(j) Relief, which would send Michell back to work pending a hearing on the case. A settlement conference has been scheduled for January 22.

Michell signed up as a Wobbly on August 1st and was given emergency delegate status to organize her co-workers at a Sears in the Northeast section of Philadelphia. On August 7 she was suspended from work to wait for an official termination by the store operator, Glenn Flemming. The six-day campaign already had more than a dozen people ready to sign union cards. News of unionizing spread like wildfire throughout the store. As soon as Michell spoke the word "union" quite a few of her

## NLRB gathering evidence in case...

*continued from page 12*

has now begun its interviews to investigate Miriam's case. Workers with information about Borders' vindictive response to her organizing are now able to tell their stories and help her get her job back.

We expect that by February, the investigation will be nearly complete and that we will be very close to getting a hearing on her case. Until that time, we will continue to urge Borders customers to buy their books at other stores, and to let Borders know their attacks on workers who organize will not go unnoticed.

Borders workers in Des Moines have recently voted for UFCW representation despite the company's attempts to intimidate them, joining workers in the Lakeview Chicago. Borders responded to the union win in Chicago by threatening to close the store.

Please let Borders Inc. know you won't patronize their stores until they reinstate Miriam Fried and respect workers' right to organize. Call Borders at 1-800-644-7733, email spokesman Peter Blackshear at pblacksh@borders.com or write Borders President Richard Flanagan, 311 Maynard St., Ann Arbor MI 48104.

## New York United University Professions backs boycott

United University Professions (AFT), which represents the 22,000 faculty and staff at the State University of New York, has asked its members to boycott Borders Books, and to contact the chain to demand that Miriam Fried be reinstated and that the chain respect workers' rights.

## Philadelphia City Council blasts Borders union-busting

*The following resolution was signed by every council member who was present (one member was absent):*

### A RESOLUTION

Urging Borders to reinstate Miriam Fried, a bookseller at their Center City Philadelphia store, who was discharged in retaliation for her union organizing activities.

WHEREAS, Borders is currently the largest bookstore in Philadelphia with stores in Center City and Chestnut Hill; and WHEREAS, Since Borders came to Philadelphia, approximately five years ago, it has become a cultural and commercial centerpiece of Downtown Philadelphia, hosting local and national authors, musical performances, storytelling for children, promoting charitable endeavors, offering discounts to elementary and secondary teachers and displaying a community bulletin board; and

WHEREAS, One of the hallmarks of all the Borders Bookstores both here and throughout the country, is that all booksellers must pass a literature proficiency test before being hired, thus assuring a high quality of sales staff; and

WHEREAS, In the beginning of 1996,

a union drive organized by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) began, culminating in an election at the end of March where the union was narrowly defeated as a result of management's promises to improve the working environment; and

WHEREAS, On June 15, 1996, Miriam Fried, a Borders Bookseller and Philadelphia resident, with excellent work evaluations, was summarily discharged allegedly for a dispute over store policy. In reality, she was fired because she was an outspoken and key union supporter. An unfair labor complaint is currently pending before the National Labor Relations Board; and

WHEREAS, Bookstores such as Borders are basic to our free society in that they promote a diversity of opinion. But an equally important tenet of a free society is the right to freely associate and advocate for the formation of unions; now therefore,

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, that we urge Borders to reinstate bookseller Miriam Fried and restore its reputation as a socially-responsible company.

— December 5, 1996

## III Publishing Blasts Borders Group Inc.

III Publishing is an independent publisher of books located in Gualala, CA. It has published 11 books to date, and specializes in anti-authoritarian fiction. It has one full time employee, Bill Meyers, who is a member of the IWW. It has not published any official IWW literature.

Borders Group Inc. operates Borders Bookstores & other bookstores. Its goal is to maximize shareholder profits. Its strategy to do this is to force independent bookstores out of business, and hopefully simultaneously destroy its rival chains.

Like all small publishers, III Publishing would like to be distributed in chain stores, since our established clients, the independent bookstores, are being wiped out by unfair practices. We are in fact stocked by Tower Books and Records. We have established that our books sell to the public, mainly through people finding them browsing, though we do advertise and receive book reviews as well.

Borders had not bought prior III Publishing titles. Since they reject most small press titles, and require even major publishers to bribe them (politely calling that coop-programs) it is difficult to argue that they were discriminating against us in particular.

Our sales representative was led to believe that they would be ordering our fall 1996 titles, *Anarchist Farm* by Jane Doe

and *The Last Days Of Christ The Vampire* by J.G. Eccarius. Sales did not materialize, except for a pathetic order for 25 copies of *The Last Days Of Christ The Vampire*.

Meanwhile, the IWW attempted to organize a Borders in Philadelphia, and in the aftermath Miriam Fried, one of the organizers, was fired...

A source at Borders informed us that Borders ordered 25 copies of *Anarchist Farm*, but was holding them rather than shipping any to stores. We speculate that Borders wants to be able to claim they are not censoring us, though perhaps they just want to get a deeper discount on special orders. We do not know if it is their general practice to order tiny amounts of books and not place them on their shelves...

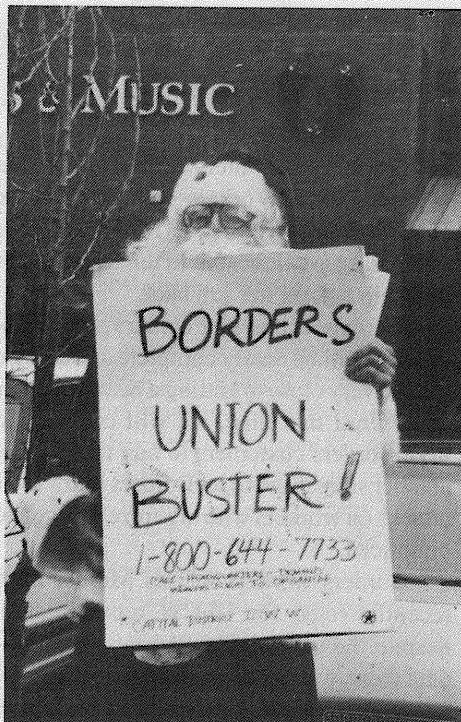
We demand that: Borders reinstate Miriam Fried. That Borders allow any Borders workers who wish it to join a union. That Borders eliminate its coop programs or at least tell the public about the programs.

III Publishing has been informed that a petition will be circulated among writers asking the public to boycott Borders until Miriam Fried is re-instated. We have orally committed to signing that statement and circulating it among our authors, but have not yet received a written statement.

For a genuine free press!

Bill Meyers, publisher





continued from page 1

invited us to picket Borders while they picketed Disney. (UNITE, AIWA, and CISPES were also picketing Macy's (also in the square) for their atrocities (including sweatshop labor). Striking workers from the Rubber Stampede factory in Oakland and organizers from ILWU Local 6 were also picketing Disney because the Disney company represents the second largest source of business for the Rubber Stampede Company. And the anti-Disney campaign mentions Borders on their flyer since Borders sells Disney books and music albums.

A dozen Wobs picketted Borders while a like number picketted Disney. We passed out hundreds of leaflets and turned away a good number of customers, many of whom were surprised that two stores in the same neighborhood could be under boycott at the same time. "You can't go anywhere anymore," complained some exasperated shoppers, as if shopping should take precedence over a living wage and/or decent working conditions. Of course, we directed shoppers to the unionized bookstores and independent outlets in San Francisco if they were interested. On the 15th the IWW was back in the square and did a repeat performance.

### Miami, Florida

Two Wobs do not an army make. But you would have thought they did from the response Joel Lewis and I got when we arrived to picket Borders Book Store in answer to their firing fellow Wob Miriam Fried for organizing for the One Big Union.

In a matter of seconds, we were surrounded by several guards from The Mayfair, the upscale shopping center in well-heeled Coconut Grove where Borders is located. They read our sign and informed us we would have to leave or be arrested.

Being a card-carrying member of the American Civil Liberties Union, I replied that we believed we were on the public sidewalk, not on Mayfair's property, and were not about to go anywhere on their say-so. If a police officer instructed us to move, I added, we would of course do so at once.

Hurried radio consultations between the guards and their high command followed. The sergeant then informed me that Mayfair's property did indeed extend beyond their building line but ended where the trees were planted in the pavement. Beyond that line, we were indeed on city land and beyond their jurisdiction. We retreated about eight feet and resumed our protest.

The manager of Borders came out and huffed and puffed, but ultimately he went away too. As we had expected, a police cruiser passed by several times, but no one bothered us or even bothered to get out. For the next three hours, we stood outside Borders handing out IWW leaflets, singing Solidarity Forever, Union Maid and other Wobblie hits with no further interference from anyone.

# Wobblies Hit Borders Union-Busting

So far as we could see, no one turned away from Borders, but many of those entering and leaving showed more than a passing interest in our songs and our sandwich board sign. Several employees within seemed to find an excuse to stroll past the window fronting on the street where we stood. Some passersby took our handouts, and others stopped to chat. Joel's guitar playing attracted a group of musicians on their way to a nearby Rainbow People's Gathering who took time to harmonize with us, drawing a small crowd, much to the consternation of Mayfair's militia.

As darkness fell, we gathered up our leaflets, our sign and ourselves and headed off into the sunset. How much we did for Miriam Fried and the OBU, we're not sure. But we are sure that Borders and anyone who saw us now knows that Solidarity is not an empty word in the IWW.

— John Gorman

### Chicago

Three local Wobs and a fellow traveler leafleted the Borders store on Michigan Avenue (aka, The Magnificent Mile) on Dec 15. We had signs reading: "Defend the Right to Organize! Reinstatement Miriam Fried!"; "Defend the Right to Organize! Boycott Borders!" and "An Injury to One is an Injury to All!" We distributed 300 or so leaflets and turned a few people away. Most folks who took the leaflets went inside the store anyway but we don't know if our leaflet changed their mind about buying there.

No negative comments except for one scissorbill who looked at the leaflet headline, "Borders Unfair" and found it necessary to comment, "Life's Unfair." Made me want to kick him in the butt! Also saw lots of fur coats on parade. Made me want to puke on the rich bastards. Anyway, Chi-town was on the line!

— Mike Hargis, Branch Scratch

### Palo Alto, California

On December 15 I was at Borders in Palo Alto. About 300 or so leaflets were distributed by yours truly over the course of two hours. I turned away quite a few people; some expressed active solidarity. One guy was embarrassed because he had entered through the back door and didn't notice me until he came out the front.

Many people took the leaflet and then went into shop, but rest assured, an impact was made. A few fellow workers expressed astonishment that the IWW was not dead. "We never died," said s/he.

— X334260

### Portland, Oregon

On 15 December the IWW leafleted Borders Books in downtown Portland from noon until 5:00 pm. Working in informal shifts, five local Wobs were joined by six Wobs who made the 75-mile trip from Eugene (which is Borders deficient), a representative from the National Writers' Union, and two members of Science Fiction Writers of America. We handed out about 900 leaflets, and talked with customers, potential customers and workers at the store.

We heard many stories about people who used to work at Borders, and about both working conditions and organizing drives at other local book stores. We also answered questions about the IWW and handed out quite a few introductory pamphlets. More people than not stone-faced us, but none of the leafletters reported any hostility.

Last time we leafleted Borders, some of the workers were confused about our purpose and angry that we hadn't talked to them first. So this time we made notices the

size and shape of bookmarkers. For the week before the action, Wobs filtered into the store and left the notices between books to prepare both workers and customers.

On Sunday worker reaction ranged from disinterest through curiosity to outright support. One took a stack of leaflets to put by his cash register for customers to take. Another asked if the anarchists who bombed Haymarket Square were still in the IWW, and listened to the explanation.

We decided to make half-sheet leaflets, both because they're easier to handle and because they look like less of an investment for people to read. An added benefit was that we could point to our three short paragraphs (text below) and then to the six long paragraphs posted on Borders' door and say "Here's the problem, and that's their attempt to say there's no problem." On the back was the letter from Noam Chomsky and a list of other people and organizations that have called for Miriam's reinstatement.

### Portland, Maine

Two Maine Wobs picketted the Maine Mall Borders Dec. 14th, beginning by inserting fliers in books throughout the store for nearly an hour before being discovered by managers. They then leafleted in front of the store. Mall security never showed, so they were able to leaflet until running out of fliers. One customer went back inside to return his purchase. And there was an opportunity to speak with interested fellow workers about how the IWW is a very different union and other general working class concerns.

*"Oh What Fun It Is To Picket In Front Of Borders Books."*



Miles Mendenhahl, Mike Hargis & Penny Pixler picketing the Magnificent Mile Chicago Borders December 15.

### Boston

Wobs began gathering at the downtown Borders Saturday at 11 a.m.; we were a dozen strong by noon. As the day went on we were joined by a choir from Share the Wealth! (singing anti-corporate carols), and friends from Food Not Bombs!, a radical bookstore, the teachers union, etc. Over the course of the day, 40 people joined our picket line (which grew to 24 at one point). FW Bill Bumpus regaled the crowd with labor songs (old classics such as Solidarity Forever [all verses] and Dump the Bosses Off Your Back, and Christmas Carols adapted to the occasion), and Jon Bekken and Russ Brandwein spoke.

No one entering Borders could claim ignorance — you couldn't get in without being offered a leaflet a few times, and invited to discuss the situation as well. The store was practically empty, leaving the manager plenty of time to come out and rant and rave about folks crossing the line in the concrete that marks the limits of Borders' no-free-speech zone.

### Don't Shop Here

*to the tune of "Jingle Bells"*

Borders fired Fried  
Because she thought to ask  
She questioned "policy"  
And now six months have passed.  
She tried to organize  
A union at the store.  
That's really why the Borders boss  
Kicked Miriam out the door.  
Don't shop here,  
Don't shop here  
Help us win this fight;  
Buy your books some other place  
'Til Borders makes it right.

### Philadelphia

The Philadelphia IWW, members of the National Writers Union, and concerned friends and ex-Borders customers joined Wobbly Miriam Fried to picket Center City Borders #21 December 15th, the six-month anniversary of Miriam being fired from the store in retaliation for her union organizing efforts.

A Philadelphia City Council resolution (printed p. 11) introduced by Councilman David Cohen and passed unanimously by the Council Dec. 5th, was distributed to potential shoppers in front of the store. Over 2,000 flyers and resolutions were put into the hands of Philadelphians, and at least 40 people chose to shop elsewhere.

Walnut Street in Philadelphia, where Borders #21 is located, is a very busy shopping corridor. Many people were already familiar with Miriam's case and were pleased to see a union so persistent in its efforts to draw public attention to the plight of a wrongfully fired worker. Two people remarked that they had been in San Francisco and Baltimore and been surprised to see picketers at Borders there.

A few of Miriam's ex-workers came out on their break to say hello and let her know that they hoped she would be able to return to the store soon. They also let us know that Borders CEO Richard Flanagan had warned them in a memo that a "small labor organization" was planning a national day of action. Quite a few workers contacted the Philadelphia GMB to ask about Miriam's case as a result of this memo, which was circulated throughout the chain — thanks Rich! Accurate information about Miriam's case is now in the hands of even more of your employees.

Borders has resorted to calling Miriam a "martyred poster child" in some letters designed to explain her firing to customers who have written in to say they will no longer be shopping there. They have also tried to use the loss of Miriam's unemployment claim to trick people into thinking her firing was legal. What they fail to mention, of course, is that the Unemployment Compensation Board did not look at the context of her firing, and that Miriam's union organizing was not allowed to be introduced as evidence to preserve her claim. Only the pretext of her firing — her discussion with General Manager Dave Stewart about inconsistent management responses to cash register policies — was deemed sufficient evidence. Miriam's claim was inactive at the time the appeal was heard. She had collected \$399 until she found work elsewhere, but Borders chose to fight this inactive claim by hiring the law firm of Jackson Lewis to challenge it in the "non-adversarial" referee hearing.

The National Labor Relations Board

continued on page 11



# What Happened to the 8-Hour Day?

The IWW Industrial Transportation Project sponsored a Dec. 19th program on the disappearance of the 8-Hour Day, followed by open discussion and presentations on the Lincoln Park Mini-Mart strike and the Borders Books boycott.

Excerpts from their call for a new 8-Hour movement follow: Are you tired of being forced to work long hours, with your life, your family and your relationships suffering because of it? Are you tired of your boss thinking that you have no other life than that of working for him?

Think about our children, who are neglected because of the long hours we must work. Think about the danger to our society when working people are driving trucks or operating dangerous equipment while they are exhausted.

Our work hours have been going up and there seems no end to this. What ever happened to the 8-hour day?

Over 100 years ago workers throughout

the U.S. were part of a movement that ultimately won the 8-hour day, 9-day work week. But today, in many industries, the 40-hour workweek is a thing of the past.

The reasons for this are many, but they include the following: 1) In the early 1980s there was a wave of wage concessions that forced workers to work longer hours in order to make the same wages as they did before. 2) Since that time wage increases

have not kept up with inflation. 3) So-called 'free trade' agreements have allowed many plants to close, with those jobs moved outside of the U.S. 4) Employers have found that it is cheaper to work employees longer hours than to hire new workers. 5) The AFL-CIO has not put its power into fighting concessions and longer hours.

For working-class people and their families this has meant great hardships. For the

employers it has meant record profits. The bosses took advantage of workers' great sacrifices to repay us with low wages, long hours and, in some cases, moving their shops to places where they could exploit workers even more.

Working people have been pushed far enough. We need to stand up the employers and recreate the 8-Hour Day movement, with demands such as: No forced overtime, No layoffs while workers on the same job are working overtime, A world-wide ban on child labor, and the Universal right of all workers to organize and strike.

We propose the building of a new 8-Hour Day Movement through the use of rallies, boycotts and direct action. We seek to join together with people throughout our area for this purpose; and to link up with people from wherever they may come in a network of autonomous groups regardless of national borders — for only universal solidarity can produce the needed results.

Please contact us at the 8-Hour Day Movement - Tacoma, c/o ITP-IWW, PO Box 5464, Tacoma WA 98415-0464.



*Members of the Boston Area General Membership Branch celebrated the first anniversary of the Branch's re-organization at a December 15th meeting and party. Boston Wobs have been picketing local Borders outlets on a weekly basis (over 13,000 leaflets distributed thus far), as well as meeting with area workers considering unionization, joining picketlines organized by other labor organizations, and mailing out the Industrial Worker. A series of educational forums are planned for the Spring.*

## Fizzle or Sizzle?

*continued from page 1*

larly moving performance as an indignant customer "just trying to buy some gas" until he got to the counter and payed for his purchase with a fist full of pennies. This action went on for nearly two hours before the police finally ushered everyone off the site, but by that time they had shut the store down for the night. Particularly pleasing for the strikers was the sight of the evening Ferry traffic passing by the gas station and the look on Parko's face as he saw all that moola just passing him by. I'd sure hate to be Parko when it comes time for him to count up his 4th quarter earnings!!!

## Portland Wobs Join Line

Six IWW stalwarts from Portland Oregon braved the rain and snow to spend a couple of hours on the LPMM picket line in a much appreciated show of solidarity with the strikers. The Portland crew are a musically inclined bunch, so the chorus of Solidarity Forever and Dump the Boss rang out in a much more pleasing to the ear manner, so much so that the scabs just had to call the precinct to get the Cops down to hear. Well, the constables did not appreciate the interruption to their usual routine and proceeded to the home of Boss Webb and read him the riot act! We are assured that the next time Parko or Webb call them out over our picket when we aren't actually storming the joint, one of them are going to jail. How's that for a switch!

*The following article by one of the strikers is reprinted from a local Seattle paper:*

## How We Struck the Lincoln Park Mini Mart

When I published the first employee newsletter at Lincoln Park Mini Mart where I work, I figured I'd get canned long before the place would see Wobblies on the pavement with picket signs, and a NLRB election in the works. As I write, the first local IWW strike in 30 years is well underway, with a full endorsement by the King County Labor Council.

Clerking at a convenience store is one of the worst of shitwork jobs. It's no coal mine or meat-packing plant, but the reality of a pistol in my face, and having to deal with some of the rudest customers to walk the face of the planet can sometimes be worse than a sharp stick in the eye.

Then there's the tightwad owner, Jim, and his thug manager, Larry. Neither is very friendly about raises, and medical benefits are out of the question, even though it would only cost them a few hundred bucks a month.

So I joined the IWW.

The first employee newsletter broke the

spell that bossman Larry had on everyone. For example, everyone thought that they were his special little one, a "good asset." When you got a little pay raise, say from \$5 to \$5.50, you were expected to not tell anyone else. The story went that the store isn't doing well, but since you are working so hard.... So you kept your trap shut. The newsletter proclaimed that folks should discuss work and that sucking up didn't have to be the rule.

Jessica, my friend and co-worker, was also fed up and joined the Wobs when we realized that people were interested in changing things at the mini mart. When we hooked up with the IWW, we had been talking union around the store for about a month, and Mark, who signed us up, began helping us to organize. We invited coworkers to a potlatch in the park and found two more supporters, Shane and Mona Lisa.

At the next meeting, Mark signed up the rest, and we ratified a letter to be delivered to Larry two days later, asking for voluntary recognition. That's when shit hit the fan.

Mona Lisa showed up to work right after Jessica and I dropped the letter off on August 8, and Larry started cornering people. Larry assigned extra work to me, like cleaning up piss-stained walls in the bathroom. Jessica was visiting me at work that night, and the boss's wife threw her out of the store, refusing to let me close until she was gone.

The next day we handed out boycott leaflets, asking customers to shop elsewhere until our dispute was settled. We had asked Larry to respond in writing, and he just ignored us. That day, the police were called on us for leafletting. The cops seemed annoyed and left. Soon after, Larry changed our schedules with only 12 hours notice. Jessica had to finish up her night shift at 11pm, and show up the next morning at 8am. We went to the NLRB and filed unfair labor practice charges.

The boss tried to bar us from talking about the union at work, and from telling customers. We walked out on August 26, protesting his unfair labor practices, and shut down the store for an hour in the afternoon. While we were on the picket line, the owner and the boss's wife kept driving up on the sidewalk barely missing us, and almost hitting Mark's 2-year-old daughter.

Business owners who were friends with the boss came down and started harassing us. One owner told us, "If you flyer in front of my business, I'll shoot you." We made a mental note to organize his place next.

We won two victories; the store closed down on Labor Day for the first time in its history, because there were not enough scabs to run it, and gas dropped ten to twenty cents, making it the cheapest in the city.

We filed for an election after being out for two weeks, and figured we could go back to work and ride it out. Fat chance. The store's hours were shortened so that the manager could scrutinize us every minute, and three Wobs had their hours cut as a result. Non-union people were relatively unaffected. The boss hung out, reading *Guns and Ammo* and glaring at us every time we mentioned the IWW or anything else about work to the customers. He took my keys away and would not let any of us count tills anymore. Mona Lisa's doctor told her not to go to work because of the stress.

Then a boot dropped. Mona Lisa had a letter served on her saying that if she didn't show up for work, she would be considered "voluntarily terminated." Shane got a letter also, claiming he had quit. We went on strike the next morning.

Another boot dropped. We started getting served with an "anti-harassment" order. It not only named us, but also two Teamsters who were helping us picket. The domestic violence unit of the Seattle Police started serving papers, even though a corporation is not allowed to use civil law in relation to a union. An immediate stay was issued by the King County Superior Court. Larry promptly withdrew the order.

With our election drawing closer, another boot dropped, this time one of ours. One afternoon about twenty cars showed up and filled the parking lot, and just hung out, washing windows and buying gas - 27 cents worth here, 19 cents worth there. Some read magazines inside, asking absurd questions. Within fifteen minutes, the gas pumps were being locked up and the store closed two hours early. The police were called and kicked people out of the parking lot, but folks still picketed on the sidewalk. We were laughing our asses off at the gas-in, and the boss has the video to prove it.

Things have just gotten worse since

then. More harassment from business owners. One came down, riding his bike, and started cursing at us, ripping up our picket signs.

Some folks seem to be glad that the Wobblies have come back to Seattle. People are signing up like crazy, and I ran out of red cards to hand out. When we were at the King County Labor Council, some old unionists were bickering: "Hey, why don't those guys (us) stand up? Are they delegates?"

"No, they're visitors."

"Well, they should stand up anyway!"

"Hey! Those are Wobblies, you respect them!"

The body of the King County Labor Council endorsed the struggle without dissent — at least no one spoke up. And you know what? We ain't been fired yet!

— John Persak

## Centralia...

*continued from page 3*

angrily to leave, but he seemed to be the exception. Those who might have been offended by our presence simply chose to ignore us, but I would say most of them seemed interested in a 'grandparentish' sort of way. I thought I was seeing a bunch of Ronald Reagan's whose Alzheimer's left them in a friendly, hazy stupor. The dynamics of the room were vastly polarized. In my mind, I was looking at tables of Bible thumping, Pat Robertson voting, flag waving, commie shooting senior citizens. And I was part of a bunch of Kropotkin reading, non-voting, flag burning' commie shooting non-citizens. I was all geared up for a major confrontation, but you know that look when grandma and grandpa have no idea what you're talking about but smile and say that they are glad to see you? That's what I felt I was greeted with.

In all, I think we were in and out in ten minutes. There was some justifiable anger about the jerk throwing paper in Anna's face and some tension with some of the younger vets, but all in all it went very smoothly. As we were getting ready to head back out, an old couple walked by us. The old guy looked at me, smiled and patted his breastpocket where I could see, neatly folded up, the flier one of us had handed to him. It was as if he were saying, "Why, thank-you young man. I had no idea. I'll read this again tonight nd think about it." I was torn between saying, "Goodbye Grandma, goodbye Grandpa," and shooting back in the dining room and shouting, "At least we don't bring rifles when we visit," but both seemed out of place, so I just waved at the old folks and left with everyone else.

— Eric Chase, X345160



## Do workers have the right to change unions?

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit ruled Oct. 22 that the Transport Workers Union has a right to prohibit a member from participating in union affairs (including voting in elections) because he supported efforts to replace the TWU with a rival union, the Aircraft Mechanics' Fraternal Association. Kenyon Wallis, a member of Transport Workers Local 514 at an American Airlines facility in Oklahoma, signed an authorization card asking the National Mediation Board to hold an election on representation by the AMFA. He also distributed the cards to co-workers.

A shop steward filed charges with Local 514 claiming that Wallis had advocated withdrawal from the TWU and had promoted a rival union. The union's executive board found him guilty of "dual unionism" and declared him to be in bad standing for a three-year period. The discipline meant that he could not hold union office, vote, or participate in union affairs.

The union claimed that because it had not expelled Wallis or caused him to lose his job, his rights had not been violated. Judge David M. Ebel ruled that the Landrum-Griffin Act's guarantee of union members' "right to meet and assemble freely with other members [and] to express any views, arguments or opinions" does not prohibit the union from denying workers obliged by contract and U.S. labor law to be represented by unions not of their choosing the right to participate in union governance.

## Death-by-overwork suits on the rise

The Nagoya (Japan) High Court upheld a lower court ruling Nov. 26 that a 63-year-old businessman had died from overwork more than 13 years ago, and ordered a labour standards inspection office to compensate his widow with pension payments.

The court ruled that Yoshikazu Abo, a salesman for an electric equipment company in Nagoya, central Japan, died from overwork in February 1983 while on a business trip to South Korea. In the 17 days prior to his arrival in South Korea, Mr Abo was sent by his company on 20 sales missions throughout Japan.

The ruling is the latest in a trickle of karoshi cases to have come before the courts. In perhaps the most worrisome trend for corporate Japan, the National Police Agency has named "work-related problems" as key factors in the increase in suicides among 50-59 year-olds during 1995.

One disturbing trend, again highlighted by a recent court judgment, is that the victims are getting younger. The father of the youngest karoshi victim so far, a 24-year-old man, was awarded \$1.1 million from his son's employers. In another recent ruling, a Japanese court held the former employer of a man who committed suicide over work-related worries fully liable for his death and ordered the company to pay compensation to the bereaved family.

## Carey re-elected

Ron Carey has won re-election as International Brotherhood of Teamsters president, with 52 percent of the vote. Carey said, "This victory sends a message to every mob boss in America — our treasury, our pension funds will never, ever again be used by organized crime in the form of a piggy bank."

But many Teamsters disagreed. Long-time reform advocate Sam Theodus ran on Carey's slate in 1991. This year he opposed Carey. "He is more corrupt than the people he's throwing out," Theodus said.

Opponent Jame Hoffa Jr has challenged the validity of the mail in ballot count (in particular a discrepancy of tens of thousands of ballots the Post Office reported delivering, but which were not present when counting began — the postal figures appear to have been based on weight).

Hoffa controls a majority of delegates to the IBT Convention, which is set to reconvene to consider restructuring the corruption-plagued union.

**Special to the Industrial Worker in our next issue**

**A Dissident Looks at IBT President Ron Carey: Opportunist or Reformer?**

## \$6 mill for keyboard injury

A Federal jury in Brooklyn has awarded nearly \$6 million to three women clerical workers who suffered arm, wrist and hand injuries while using LK201 keyboards made by Digital Equipment Corp. The verdict is the first successful claim to be pressed by victims of repetitive stress injuries.

## Human Relations...

*continued from page 16*

have no value — except as profit — if they are not consciously used to establish human ties. And therein lies our challenge.

Establishing these human connections has diverse meanings. There is a growing awareness in some "grass-roots" and workers' organizations that the miserable environmental conditions and the low wages of the Mexican proletariat, besides in themselves being unworthy, also threaten the welfare of the U.S. and Canadian working class, and they are reacting by engaging themselves in the struggles of the Mexican proletariat. The North American Free Trade Agreement and the Maastricht Treaty in Europe have the effect of bringing out into the open the impossibility of waging even a defensive struggle — against attacks on the social wage, the environment, work hours, and wages — without crossing borderlines.

Notably it is the workers who have seen their jobs disappear across the border to the maquiladora zones who have led the way. More important, much of the solidarity-work is carried out on a shopfloor level where personal bonds are established.

This kind of solidarity compelled by necessity not only opens up eyes for a broader context, it generates environments where

## Sears charges...

*continued from page 11*

for their slot they risked being fired. If they did show up they wouldn't be paid — they would just retain the pleasure of working for such a lovely company. The "star system" would also occasionally kick out an unexpected 11-hour shift for workers without any notice.

A sign hangs above the punch-in clock stating that if anyone works overtime, even after being asked to do so by a manager, that overtime payment is subject to approval by the store operator.

To receive health benefits workers must put in 1,250 hours by the first anniversary of their hiring date. A worker who came up a few hours short was denied benefits and told she would have to wait an entire additional year to get benefits. At \$6.50 an hour, health benefits are an absolute necessity, because doctor visits are completely unaffordable.

Instead of giving their workers enough hours per week to survive, Sears hires more and more workers. Their reasoning was that no one was ever "reliable or available" to work at the last minute if someone called out. The fact of the matter is that employees were clamoring for work, but Sears policy did not allow co-workers to substitute for each other and would not pay workers who came to fill in.

The Philadelphia IWW is looking forward to reviving our organizing drive with Michell Heim back in place at Sears. Although we expect a vattle from Sears' lawyers, the merits of Michell's case cannot be ignored no matter how much money and resources the company squanders making its excuses. The pretext for Michell's firing has not yet been explained, but we can't wait to see what they come up with.

— Alexis Buss

knowledge and experiences about oppression and struggles are exchanged, and where not only how things are is discussed, but also how they ought to be. But most important, participants regain faith in their ability to influence everyday life. The common interest tied up with the working class' struggle to escape the fetters of capital, emerges when struggles cross borderlines. Into the underlying struggle against capital are integrated environmental, women's and anti-racist causes, local causes with global ones.

Another society presupposes among other things that these human connections are generalized. The moment struggles gets locked up behind borders we are forced to take part in the competition between capitals. Without these human connections — which are at the same time economic — we will not be able to take charge of the world. Even if communism without state — anarchism — presupposes a much greater degree of local and regional production, making the production facilities and knowledge into commons (free and available for everyone), the human ties and possibilities that mutual dependence create will for a long time be necessary obstacles against the resurgence of market relations, competition and subordination.

— Harald Beyer-Arnesen, Lønns-slaven  
Postboks 1920, Vika, N-0125 Oslo  
Norway

## Substitute teachers want own union

A group of substitute teachers is seeking to withdraw from the Boston Teachers Union and form an independent union. Although they have been BTU members for 13 years, substitutes have little say in union decision-making and have seen contract after contract ignore their low pay and miserable working conditions.

Substitutes United in Boston complains

## Book Review

### "A Little Working-Class Sense"

That's the title of the newest pamphlet in a series being issued by the Industrial Transportation Project of the IWW (PO Box 5464, Tacoma WA 98415-0464). This 42-page pamphlet is an anthology of short essays by long-time Wobbly longshoreman Gilbert Mers. The articles originally ran between 1979 and 1996 in the always interesting paper, *Bayou La Rose*.

Gilbert Mers addresses the important issues facing the labor movement: the need to abolish capitalism before it kills us all and renders our planet a sterile wasteland; how to strike and win; union scabbing; the need to organize democratically run, revolutionary unions if we hope to build a better world.

Mers believes that there is a single, fundamental issue that must be addressed: "Capitalism is an evil system through and through, wherein the good fortune of one is the misfortune of another, inexorably. Every successful venture under capitalism has been, is, and will be brought about by the failure of another..."

"The Single Issue, if we are to bring true humanity to this planet, is to eliminate the system we call capitalism, the profit system. We need to talk about that. Because talking leads to action."

Or again, in an essay on "Scabbing: Who's the Real Enemy?" "The real enemy is not a who. It's a what. It's the wage system... Abolish the wage system, the system that capitalism depends on."

But Mers is rarely polemical. Rather, he discusses what's happening to the world around us in a down-to-earth style, drawing on his observations over 80 years on this planet. In addition to Mers' musings on the rotten condition of our present economic arrangements, Mers reflects on his decades in the labor movement, the dangers of complacency, and above all the need to struggle. Some of this is covered in more detail in Mers' autobiography, *Working the Waterfront*. But in this pamphlet Mers touches more directly on the conclusions he has drawn in his decades in the labor movement. Recommended.

## Yale TAs...

*continued from page 7*

union organizing among teaching assistants at private universities across the U.S.

The Board will begin formal proceedings if Yale refuses to pay back pay to teachers who lost their jobs and post "Notices to Employees" acknowledging that it is illegal for the university to fire, demote, expel, blacklist or threaten graduate teachers engaged in strike actions.

"This is a tremendous vindication for our members who stood up to unprecedented threats in order to demand the most basic of democratic rights," said GESO Chair Robin Brown. "Even more, we are thrilled that this decision clears the way for TAs around the country to pursue organizing drives of their own. The General Counsel's decision reflects what we ourselves have known all along — that the work of graduate instructors is the same as that of any other teacher, and the fact that we're also enrolled in PhD programs is no excuse to deny us the rights which all other employees enjoy. If nothing else came out of the grade strike, to have won this right is an achievement we will always be proud of."

that while regular teachers received a \$2,000 pay raise this year, substitutes received no increases. The substitutes are seeking a starting salary of \$170 per day — the same amount new teachers currently earn. That would be about twice what substitutes are now paid.

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# Labor History

**The Centralia Tragedy of 1919: Elmer Smith and the Wobblies** by Tom Copeland. \$17.50.

**Fellow Worker: The Life of Fred Thompson.** Compiled by D. Roediger.

Autobiographical reflections and philosophy from a veteran Wobbly who bridged the generations. \$10

**The Great Bisbee Deportation of July 12, 1917**  
compiled by Rob Hanson. \$2.50

**Rebel Girl,** the autobiography of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. \$9.95.

**Working the Waterfront.**  
Wobbly longshoreman Gilbert Mers tells of 42 years on the Texas waterfront as a rank-and-file radical. Workers' history as it should be told. Hardcover: \$20

**The American Labor Movement: A New Beginning.** by Sam Dolgoff.  
A veteran IWW organizer traces the history of labor militance and offers his vision for building a new, radical, rank-and-file labor movement. \$5

**Strike!** by Jeremy Brecher.  
A history of U.S. workers' struggle from workers' point of view. Argues class upsurges are based in everyday live and rank & file initiative. \$15

**Sacco and Vanzetti, The Anarchist Background.** by Paul Avrich. hardcover, 265 pages, \$15.

**Miners & Medicine – West Virginia Memories.** Claude Frazier  
An intimate recounting of medical problems and daily life in the coalfields in the early part of the century. Hardcover, \$10

**Workers and Dissent in the Redwood Empire.** Daniel Cornford  
Turn-of-the-century radicalism among lumberworkers in North California. \$12

**Seven Red Sundays.** Ramón Sender  
A highly readable political novel about a revolutionary strike in Spain. Cast of communists, anarchists and syndicalists. \$7

**A Generation of Boomers, The Patterns of Railroad Labor Conflict in 19th Century America.** Shelton Stromquist, \$10

**Hard-Pressed in the Heartland**  
by Peter Rachleff. P-9's struggle against Hormel & the UFCW suggests the possibility of a militant, rank & file, community-based unionism. pub'd \$12, now \$5

## Clearance

**The Road to Rebellion, Class Formation and Kansas Populism, 1865-1900** by Scott McNall, pub'd \$49.95, now \$10.

**Power!** by MacShane, Plaut & Ward. Black workers' fight to improve everyday life and transform South Africa. \$8, now \$4

**The Yale Strike of 1984-85** now \$4  
**Break-Ins, Death Threats and the FBI, The Covert War Against the Central America Movement,** list \$14, now \$6.

**The Cointelpro Papers,** (documents) list \$16, now \$7

# Books for Rebel Workers

## Holiday Cards

We have the cat knocking over the xmas tree available again this year, for \$5/dozen. Also a card designed by Joe Hill, 4 color, glossy cover, \$10/dozen. May Pole cards, featuring workers dancing around a May Pole flying the red flag, are \$5/dozen.

**IWW Calendar**  
1997 Calendar, 14 photos. \$8.50

**One Big Union.** by IWW.  
The basic introduction to the structure and methods of the Industrial Workers of the World. \$2

**The General Strike.**  
Ralph Chaplin's musical version of the IWW Preamble notes "without our brain and muscle not a single wheel can turn." He develops that idea in this essay. \$2

**Labor Law for the Rank & Filer.** by Staughton Lynd.  
Revised and updated, this classic self-help manual is subtitled: "building solidarity while staying clear of the law." \$7

**Are You Furious?**  
Borders boycott campaign resource manual. \$5 minimum donation

**IWW Organizing Manual (2nd Ed)**  
A guide to building the IWW on the job. \$5

**IWW Little Red Songbook (36th Edition)**  
103 labor songs from around the world, with music. Includes classics and new songs by Billy Bragg, Anne Feeney, Charlie King, Utah Phillips, etc. \$10

**Rebel Voices.**  
Songs of the IWW sung by IU 630 Wobs. Tape \$10.

**We Have Fed You All for 1,000 Years.**  
Utah Phillips sings Wobbly songs. Tape \$10.

**IWW Buttons**  
**Fire Your Boss!** \$1.  
**Black Cat/Direct Action,** \$1.  
**IWW Globe** circled by motto: "Labor is Entitled to All it Creates." Black & Red, \$1.50.

## Silent Agitators

10 designs to a sheet. 50 cents a sheet, minimum order 4 sheets. Wet and stick.

# Workers' Culture

**Juice is Stranger than Friction.** by T-Bone Slim.  
Funny and irreverent, Slim's popular writings for the *Industrial Worker* of the 20s and 30s are collected for the first time. \$8

**Canadian IWW Songbook**  
41 songs by Arlene Mantle, Rick Fielding, Faith Nolan, Len Wallace & others, with music & chords. \$5.

**Posters** by Carlos Cortez  
Lucy Parsons, Ben Fletcher or Joe Hill. \$15

**Crystal Gazing the Amber Fluid.** by Carlos Cortez.  
IWW artist's poetic take on life today. \$4

**Images of Labor.** compiled by John Gorman  
Memorabilia from the National Museum of Labor History, London – badges, banners, buttons, sculpture, paintings, etc. from the British labor movement. \$12

**Images of Labor.** ed. by Moe Foner  
A coffee-table book alternating color art work and quotes. \$10

**Mad in the USA.** by Gary Huck & Mike Konopacki.  
Their third cartoon collection. "These unbeholden bozos are the best class-warrior cartoonists of our time." \$12

**Woodie's 20 Grow Big Songs.**  
Woodie Guthrie's songbook for little kids. Hardcover, \$10.

**RAW, High Culture for Low-brows** ed. by Art Spiegelman & Francoise Mouly, \$10.

**Food Not Bombs.**  
Veggie recipes and how-to information for feeding the hungry in this society where food is a privilege. \$9

**Break Their Haughty Power.** by Eugene Nelson.  
Fictionalized biography of Joe Murphy, who was an IWW member between 1919 and 1924. \$12

**Cassettes, \$10 each.**  
**Heartland, Anne Feeney Live** includes "War on the Workers"  
**Good News. Sweet Honey** in the Rock  
**All Used Up.** Utah Phillips  
**Don't Mourn, Organize!** Songs of Joe Hill by various artists  
**I Have Seen Freedom.** Si Kahn  
**As Seen on No TV.** Chris Chandler  
**Smash the State and Have a Nice Day.** Citizens Band  
**It Takes A Lot of People.** Tribute to Woody Guthrie by Larry Long & kids  
**A World to Win.** Tom Juravich  
**Greenfire.** Dakota Sid, Travers Clifford  
**Food Phone Gas Lodging.** Charlie King  
**Justice.** Toshi Reagon  
**Out of Darkness.** Tom Juravich  
**Look to the Left.** Anne Feeney

**Video Documentary**  
**Older = Bolder: Anarchist Elders,** by Zimya Toms-Trend. 28-minutes; veteran Wobblies reflect on their struggles and ideas. VHS, \$20.00

## Bumperstickers

Six bumperstickers, each with IWW Globe on left. Slogans: Solidarity Forever, One Big Union, Because Capitalism Cannot Be Reformed, An Injury to One Is an Injury to All!, Don't Mourn Organize, Labor is Entitled to All It Creates. Black on durable white stock, \$1.25 each, post-paid.

# Radical Thought

**The World Bank: A tale of power, plunder & resistance** by Alec Dubra & Mike Konopacki  
A comic book in lurid color. \$2.95

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# Price Pfister workers go hungry to save jobs

While most people in Los Angeles celebrated Thanksgiving by eating too much, three women and two men in San Fernando Valley marked the occasion by not eating at all. They didn't have a lot to be thankful for.

In a small group of tents erected in a barren corner of Pacoima, near the intersection of Paxton and San Fernando, the five began a hunger strike November 21. They've been living there ever since. Behind their planton rises a old established piece of the San Fernando Valley industrial landscape — the big Price Pfister plant.

For decades, the factory has turned out the bathroom and kitchen faucets which are fixtures in millions of southland homes. In the process it's employed thousands of working-class residents of Pacoima and surrounding municipalities.

Price Pfister, however, or at least a good part of it, is leaving Los Angeles after many years. Hundreds of workers, including the five hunger strikers, have already lost their jobs. More layoffs have yet to come.

Workers at Price Pfister are mostly immigrants, and their protest has found an ally in the Los Angeles Manufacturing Action Project, a growing nerve center for the struggles of southern California's immigrant workforce.

Hunger striker Victoria Sevilla began working in the packing department in 1989. Although the work was heavy, at \$11.03/hour it was the best job she'd had since arriving in LA from Altamira, Guerrero in 1977. At 40 years old, with two children and four grandchildren, she doubts she will find another job at a similar wage. "There are

plenty of jobs for immigrants in LA," she explains, "but almost all pay the minimum."

After layoffs started earlier this year, Price Pfister workers formed a committee in October to try to get severance benefits. Although U.S. law only requires a 60-day notice of a plant closure, Mexican workers often have higher expectations, since Mexican law requires a week's severance pay for every year of service. The Price Pfister workers approached their union, Teamsters Local 986. They felt the union had not made a strong enough effort to fight the job cuts, and demanded to be included in negotiations over layoffs, and over any benefits offered by local authorities to keep production in Pacoima. The local union eventually included the committee in negotiations, and has helped pay for the planton and many protest demonstrations.

In negotiations, the company offered to pay one-half week's pay per year of service, up to 26 years, but only for those still employed at the time an agreement is signed. The 300 workers already on the streets, including the hunger strikers, get nothing under that proposal. As layoffs continue, even fewer qualify. On October 23 Price Pfister vice-president Sam Wheeler told workers that the company would stop negotiating if protests continued, and might even speed up the layoffs. He announced that future demonstrations would be videotaped.

LAMAP's involvement in the fight at Price Pfister comes on the heels of its success in the Teamster's tortilla strike at Mission Foods. There LAMAP used connections developed over two years of research

and coalition-building to make the strike a community issue. "LAMAP jumped out of the pages of research books, and into the streets," says Miguel Contreras, the first Latino leader of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, who won office just a few months ago.

LAMAP was organized to put those connections to work, not just in the tortilla strike, but in a long-term strategy to organize Los Angeles' immigrant industrial workforce. LA lives on immigrant labor. It is the largest manufacturing center in the U.S. by far, with 717,000 workers pouring into its factories every day. Most of them come here from Mexico, Central America and Asian countries around the Pacific Rim.

The southland's immigrant workforce has been the backbone of strikes and union organizing drives for almost a decade, producing more labor activity than any other area of the country. LAMAP, a project initiated by unions, academic researchers and community activists, is welding together an alliance based on that ferment, in order to unionize a big chunk of that industrial workforce. If it succeeds, it will change, not just the wages and working conditions of immigrants, but the political balance of power throughout southern California.

Price Pfister originally claimed that its closure in Pacoima was forced by California Proposition 65's regulations against environmental pollution. The company used to use a production process in which it melted metal, including lead, in a foundry, and poured it into molds for faucet parts. Lead is extremely toxic, causing brain damage

and learning disability especially among children. Faucet parts are now produced by machining, which has replaced foundry operations and eliminated lead contamination.

But the five hunger strikers in Pacoima, like most of the other laidoff workers, never worked in the foundry. Their jobs were eliminated when the company transferred the assembly of faucet parts, and some packing operations, to a maquiladora factory just over the border in Mexicali. Employment in the Mexicali plant has grown to over 800, and the number of jobs in Pacoima has fallen from 1300 to below 1000.

"This is obviously another sad episode in the history of NAFTA," Ochoa says. "The company is moving because labor costs less in Mexicali, and in the process it's eliminating well-paying, stable jobs here in LA."

As trucks continuously leave the plant, ferrying machines to Mexicali, 2-300 Price Pfister workers meet every Sunday in a Pacoima park. There they plan marches, like that held the day after Thanksgiving, and a leafletting campaign in front of Home Depot.

"How can Price Pfister dump us out of our jobs, and then turn around and expect Latinos to continue buying their faucets?" asks hunger striker Alejandra Torres. "What they are doing is a kind of discrimination against our whole community."

For more information, call the Los Angeles Manufacturing Action Project, 213-585-4596.

— David Bacon

## From production-links to human relations

The syndicalist idea's most fundamental principle is captured in the expression, "direct action": Instead of negotiating through representatives, to take direct possession of one's rights, defining them in one's own terms, making the conditions of life the responsibility of all and the privilege of none. At least partially this principle was applied by the people of Chiapas who took back their land without prior permission; first afterwards, and as a sign of weakness, appealing for their actions to be sanctified by law. This weakness was not foremost military, but the absence of the workers of North-America simultaneously taking possession of *their* "land" — the production facilities.

In a world where most things are interconnected, today the primary obstacle is *the feeling* of impotence; the sense of being a spectator to a reality unaffected by individual thoughts and behaviour.

Much has changed since industrial capitalism bundled people together, not only within the confines of manufacturing plants but also in the time they to a degree could call "their own." Around the factories working class quarters were built and served as the framework of working class communities. The correlation of work inside the factory gates with the life on the outside was self-evident, and the transparency of this correlation reinforced workers in their struggle for another society and gave them faith in their ability to exercise counter-power within the one they were living.

In this respect these societies were *more* democratic than the present ones. Through their shared knowledge people in these working-class communities knew the history of the products that made up their material existence... and recognized that — even if others ruled over it — they themselves were the makers of everyday life. It did not seem far fetched, to take charge of the the factory premises, the raw materials and the infrastructure, and utilize it all for the satis-

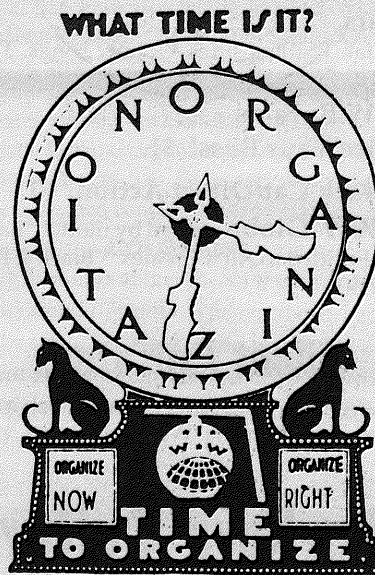
faction of ones dreams and needs.

With the coming of the modern urban landscape, where you live in one part of town, work in another, and have your relatives and friends scattered about, "private life" emerged as something separated from production. The far from perfect working class communities disintegrated and we were left to tend to ourselves. Or were we? In place of a diversified knowledge distinguished by dialogue, we are individually being invaded by a public monologue where we no longer are participants; a process that has gathered pace with television-transmission into every home (which does not mean that the television-medium in itself is the cause of this.)

The modern urban landscape (which is not restricted to the cities) is largely a side-effect of the more fundamental change in the speed by which modern means of transportation (and information) travel.

The fragmentation of our daily lives is at the same time the history of the fragmentation of the production process — of the prominent role carved out for transcontinental transportation through the transfer of semi-finished products between the different links in the production process; back and forth between the different geographic and economic regions, but also within these regions. For a long time there was something exotic attached to imported products. International trade in manufactured products was far from negligible, but most goods continued to be produced and sold within the same region, or at least within the same country. This picture has changed.

Today, if a person should try to trace the origins of the products daily surrounding us, it would result in a travellers tale of which the world has never seen the like. The entire world is taken into use in the making of everyday life. Now there is only global production, separated by trade, united by chain conveyors. No longer are white goods, computers or TVs produced in Japan, Ger-



many or in United States, nor hardly any other complete product, only fragments, some pieces in a global jigsaw puzzle, that includes us.

As the constantly more numerous products of everyday life can be produced at an increasing speed (and the numbers employed in agriculture and fishing decreases globally), capitalist production has subordinated larger and larger areas of life (besides

having developed a constantly extending parasitic capital, such as the financial industry; a phenomenon which started as a division of labor between capitalists).

Growing numbers of wage slaves are involved in the production of services. But for the person employed within a restaurant chain (where prepared food is produced, besides lot of the tasks included in house-keeping, and increasingly a certain learned behaviour and attitude) it is not self-evident that his or her work is linked to the work of millions through the production of agricultural machinery, vessels, containers, road surface, trucks, private cars, telephones.... Far less does he or she automatically feel a belonging to the people that do this work. *The human link between these activities is foremost between the bosses.* Between workers it is only *potential*.

It has become an effort to keep track of the numerous threads binding our lives as proletarians together. A condition that easily lends itself to confusion and reaction. But at the same time capital undermine local ties, it produces material connections throughout the world. Connections which

*continued on page 14*

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